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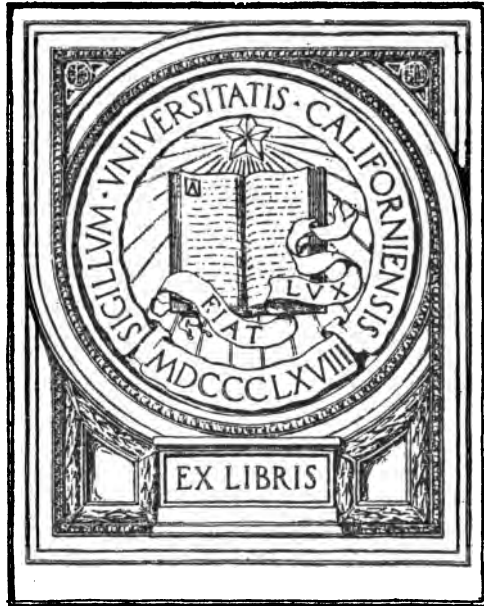
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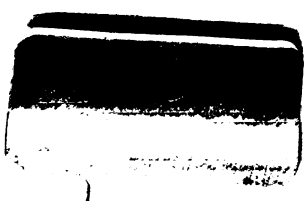
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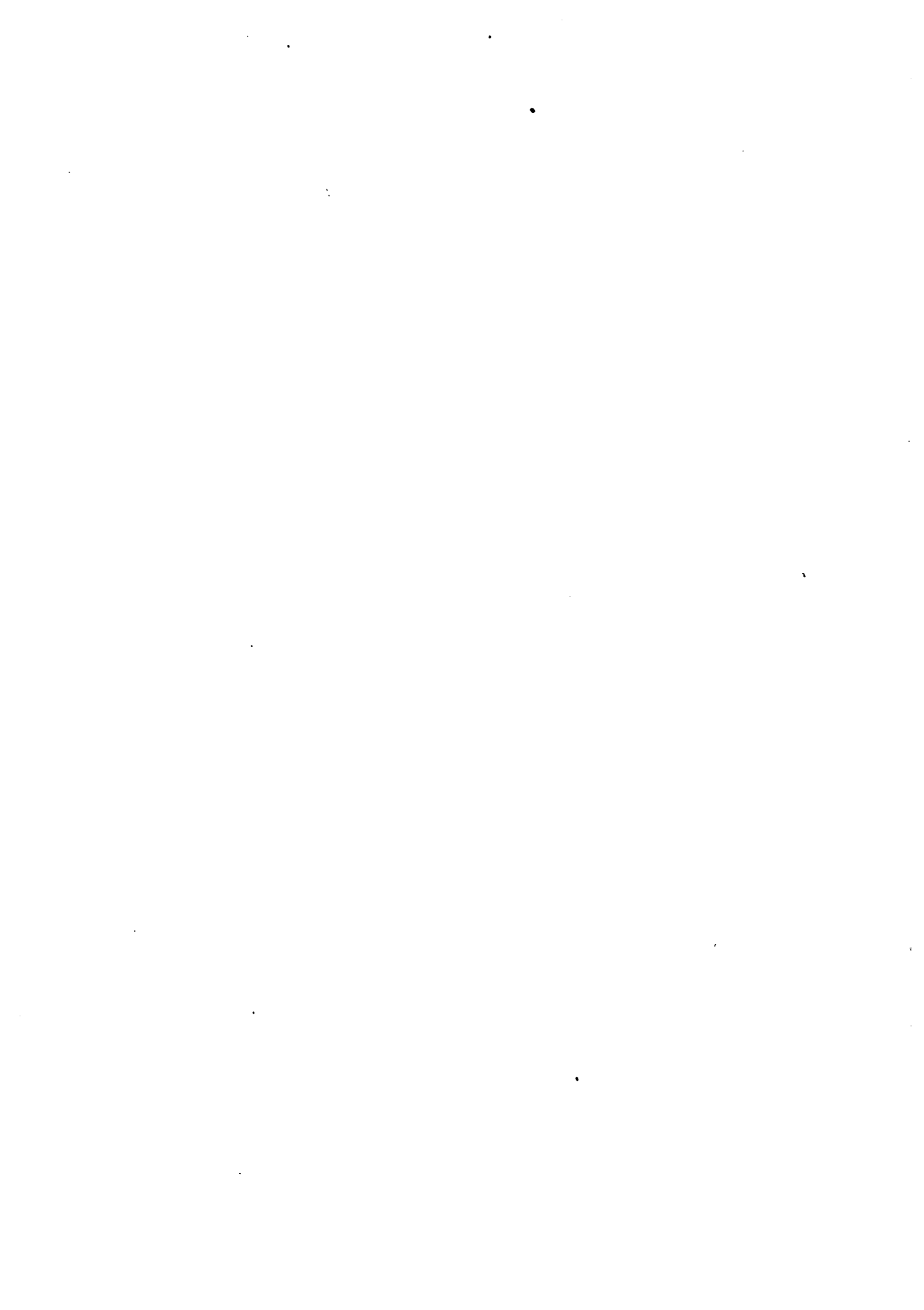
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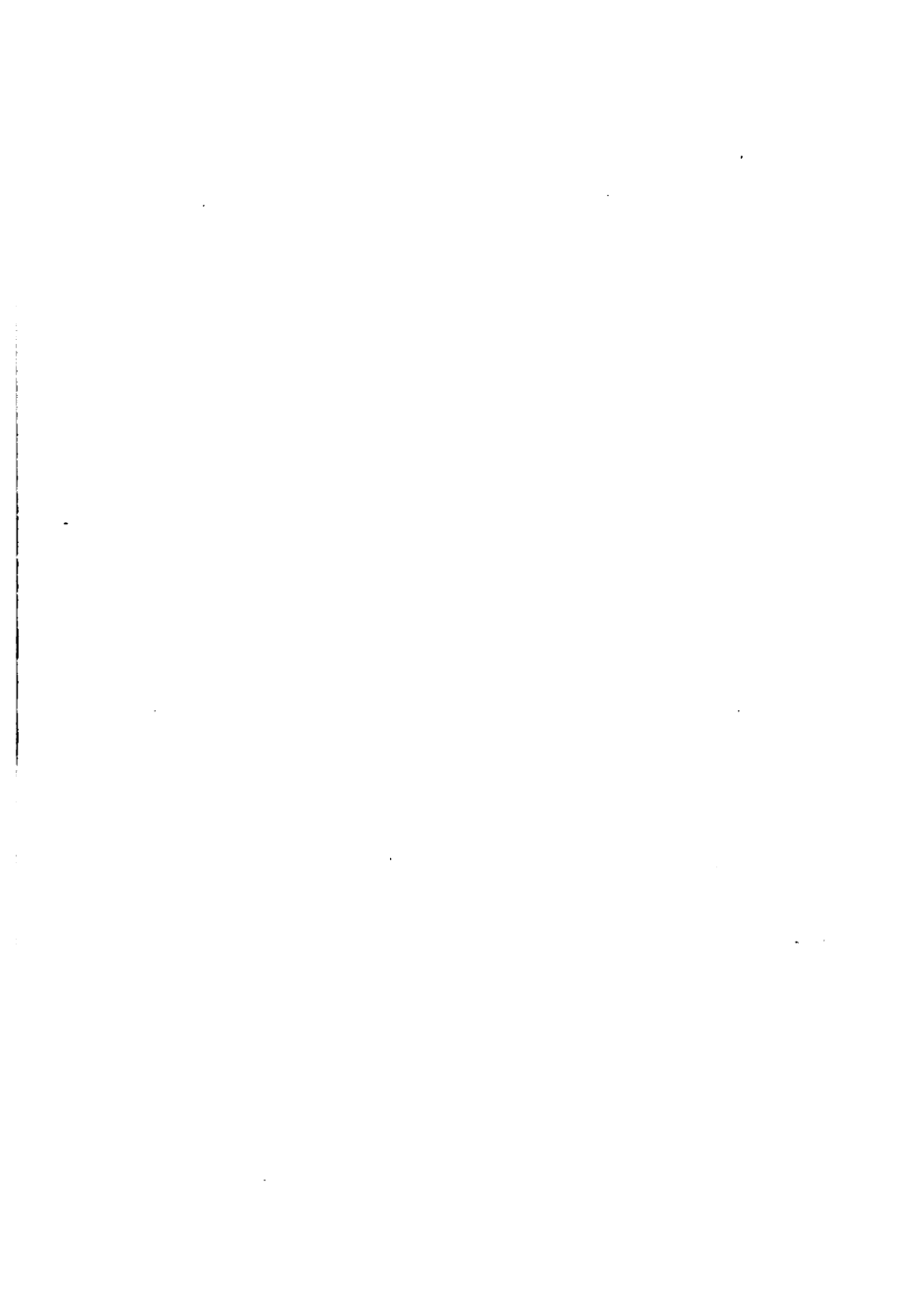
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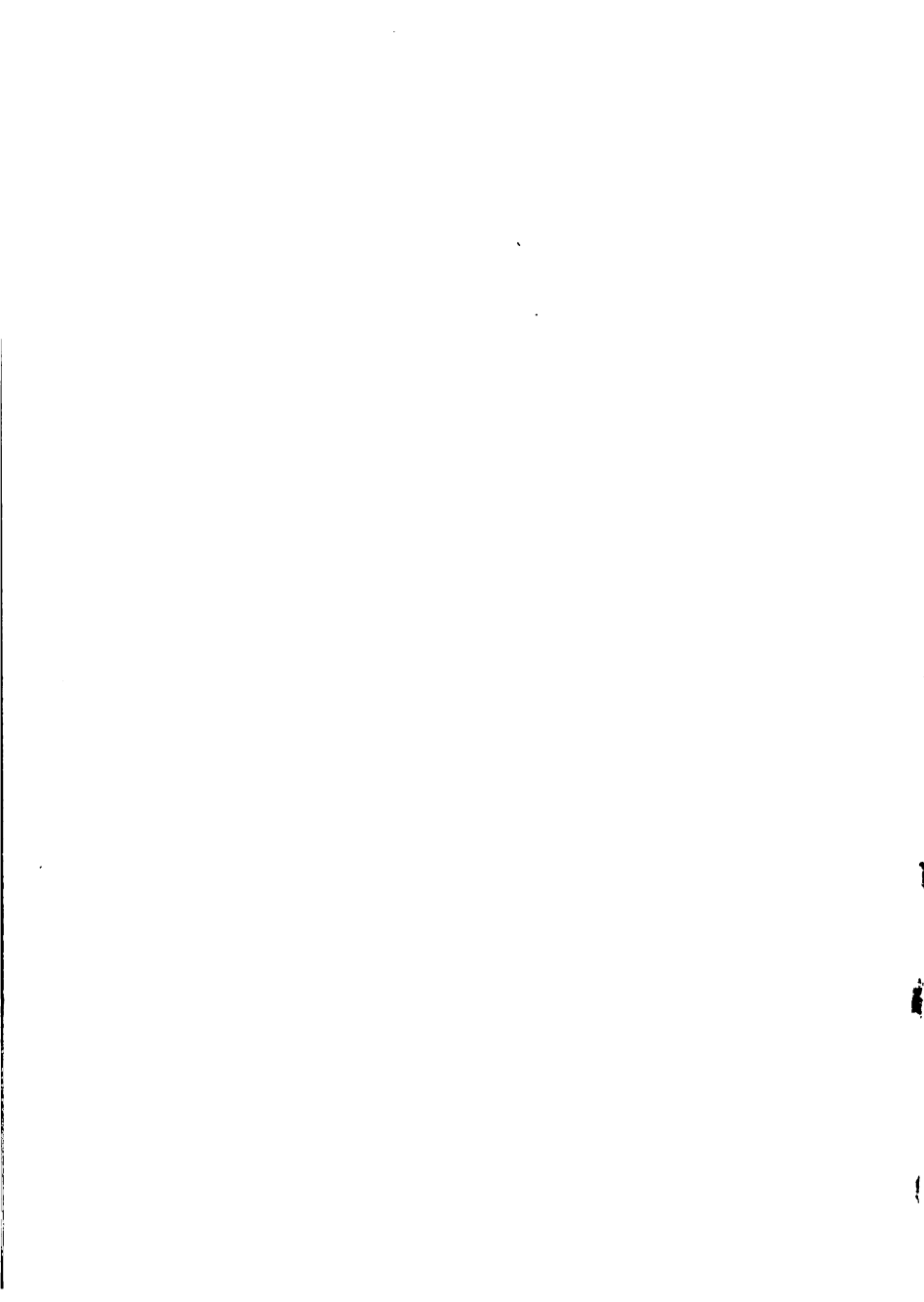


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# HEROIC FRANCE

BY

ANNA BOWMAN DODD  
" "

AUTHOR OF

"Three Normandy Inns," "Falaise, the Town of  
the Conqueror," "On the Knees of  
the Gods," etc., etc.

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# Heroic France

## CHAPTER I

### *The Nation in Arms*

**A** FRANCE that vibrated to a common, passionate emotion, and from the Côtes du Nord to the Côtes de l'Azur; the great heart of France throbbing with such intensity of feeling that her lips in the first hours of the shock of the tremendous realities before her were all but mute—this mighty heart of France on the second day of August had leapt within her with the same sense of sacrificial joy as the mother feels when the child below her bosom



*HEROIC FRANCE*

stirs with life; her own life may be the forfeit of her triumphant assurance of the new forces within—but what mother, what nation gifted with such glorious endowments of mind, of nature and of spirit as France counts the cost of sacrifice?

Never, perhaps, in the long centuries of her historic existence has France experienced the single-hearted enthusiasm that swept the country as village after village, town after town read the order for a general mobilization. On that second day of August France presented to the eyes of the world, as she must to those of her marveling enemy, a nation as closely knit, as intimately, as inextricably welded together, as Germany believed her to be hopelessly divided. Party hate, political dissensions had disappeared, as if by magic. There were neither Socialists,

nor Royalists, nor Internationalists, nor Radicals. There was one France, superb in its courage, conscious of its moral and military strength, outwardly calm, yet burning hot within, from the very intensity of its joyous enthusiasm.

At last, France was to be allowed to fight!

The long years of her suppressed hate; the shame, the humiliation she had suffered at the hands of her deadly, powerful enemy; the spectre of dread that had haunted her prosperous fields, that had hovered over her wide-spread commerce, that had made every move in the defensive, international game fraught with possible danger—this hate could at last find its longed-for victim. The shame of Fashoda and the humiliation that had followed the dismissal of one of France's most gifted ministers—of Monsieur Del-



cassé—could now be wiped out by a French invasion of Berlin. The haunting dread of war could be turned into the blazing glory of victory.

In all France there was, indeed, but one mind and one heart. She was a vast family, fronting a common enemy.

This all but instantaneous welding together had been accomplished as though by enchantment. In less than a few days after the violent explosions of party discussions, fired by the disgraceful Caillaux trial, and only four days after the assassination of Jaurès, the miracle of a patriotic France, from which every vestige of party strife had disappeared, was the nation's answer to the misled German War-Lords. The anxious days that had elapsed before the mobilization of the French army, and the nervous tension resulting from the fluctuations of hope

and fear of the worst, had worked upon the sensitive French nature. When the order for mobilization was made public, France had found herself. The test of the new forces that had been at work forging a new France was triumphantly met.

From the very first the whole nation presented, to the last man, that singular calm, that power of restraint and of a dignified acceptance of the chances that lay before them—for success, for victory, or for a possible crushing defeat,—that were to prove a moral force in French character wholly unsuspected; as yet, perhaps, even unknown to themselves. Self-revelation comes as a lightning flash in the storm that tests character.

When France rose in heroic defense of her soil, her people, her rights, and, also of that higher form of civilization of

which she need not, unlike her clumsier neighbor, boast in loud, trumpet-blasts—since the delicate and exquisite flower of her civilization blooms in one form or another throughout all Christendom, literally shedding its beneficent perfume on the just and on the unjust—from the instant France flew to carry her flag to the front she was to give the world one of the first of the surprises the war was to yield.

The order to mobilize was received throughout the entire country with surprising, with superb calm.

“Ça y est!”

This was the cool, phlegmatic comment that leapt to the lips of thousands of men, as they read that within twenty-four hours they were to be ready to join their regiments. In Paris, as in the provinces, workmen and nobles, peasants and manufacturers, merchants and *petits rentiers*,

left workshops, châteaux, farms, factories, shops and modest homes, at the word of command, in orderly haste. The last quality one would predict Frenchmen would display at such a crisis was the one conspicuously exhibited. The whole nation was stiffened into an attitude of rigid sang-froid. Now and again the deeper, inner meaning of a word is revealed. The Frenchman's coining of that compound word "sang-froid" was no accident. Beneath all the effervescence, the garrulity, the explosive enthusiasm, there are other more profound, ethnological deposits in French character. That deeper source can only be stirred by the moving finger of pain or of some great national calamity.

"Tout le peuple français, sans distinction de classes, est frémissant d'impatience et garde le sang-froid, indice de son

inébranlable volonté"—and this from a Bordelaise Journal!

Those of us who witnessed the departure of the French troops for the front; who looked upon those serene, smiling, controlled countenances could not but marvel at so surprising a revelation of "cold-blooded" courage.

It was superb, it was sublime—but it seemed hardly French. The whole will of a great people was bent to a single purpose. Their calm was not want of emotion. It was rather due to an excess of feeling.

There was another element colder still than the steely bravery animating the least impressionable "piou-piou." There was a cold hate that had been all but unconsciously nursed to this white heat and for long years.

"Pourvu que ce soit pour cette fois-ci."

That cry of a Vosges peasant as he read his order to don his uniform, was the general, the universal prayer that burst from the lips of millions of Frenchmen. The waiting on time to bring about its revenges had worn deep furrows into French patience. The hate of Prussia, that had lain half-buried beneath political upheavals, now blazed forth with volcanic ferocity.

The lava-flood of national enthusiasm, of this re-kindled passion for revenge, had swept France, burying beneath its fiery outbreak all minor discords, all purely family wreckage. The issues before the nation were known to be momentous. From the very first, though brave France could say with firm lips, "Well, it has come at last. We are ready,"—not knowing she was only half-ready—yet from the very first it knew the coming struggle

was to be for France's very existence. It was to be a life and death combat.

These tragic days had been preceded by the sensational Caillaux trial, a trial whose social and political consequences had aroused the bitterest feeling throughout France.

## CHAPTER II

### *The Caillaux Trial*

**I**N the life of nations, as in that of individuals, tragic events in certain crises have been known to follow in such quick succession as to suggest a conscious planning of dramatic sequence. Later investigations reveal the long chain of casualties which precipitated the climax.

During this mid-July, 1914, France was rent and torn, was at once horrified and appalled, as she was also to be vastly entertained by the crowded figures that filled her stage.



France at this eventful period was one vast audience. All eyes were centered on the Caillaux trial. As all the world remembers, M. Calmette, Editor of the Paris *Figaro*, had determined upon the ruin of M. Caillaux, then Minister of Finance.

Although posing as a patriot, inspired by the loftiest ideals of political conduct, M. Calmette's methods of attack were of the lowest defamatory character. He even descended to the crime of printing private letters. It was known throughout Paris that two letters, of a particularly intimate character, were in his possession; the publication of these letters would have meant the ruin of the ex-Prime Minister's wife. Driven to the point of desperation by the fear that Calmette might publish these letters to damage still further her husband's

reputation as well as her own, to prevent such an exposure Madame Caillaux sought the editor in his own office and killed him.

In the ensuing trial every element essential to drama, as well as situations replete with tragic consequences, were presented with lavish abundance. The central figure at the opening of the trial was the murderess—a woman. The lady, one must call her such—she being the wife of an ex-Prime Minister—was sufficiently young to excite both interest and curiosity; her past was one a gossip-thirsty public delights in, since her history was flecked by those somewhat dubious lights and dusty shadows that play upon an adventurous career.

The other dramatis personae in this sensational trial were such as one looks

upon, indeed, chiefly from across the footlights; when thus grouped together, they serve as an effective background. Only in half a century or so can one hope to see them figuring realistically in a witness-box.

Ex-Prime Ministers; ministers who had stood high in public favor; political adherents; personal friends; and an ex-wife,—each in turn, day after day, mounted behind the iron railing. As the trial proceeded, little by little its original *raison d'être* seemed to have been quite changed. In lightning flashes successive revelations were playing their lurid light on corruption in high places. The swift change from the judging of a crime supposed to have been prompted by intimate personal motives, to issues of vast political and national importance, made this trial second only in dramatic

setting and far-reaching consequences to the Dreyfus scandal.

To the curious eyes of the world at large, the scenes presented in the Paris criminal courts during the proceedings of this famous trial were typically, essentially French—for the world at large knows little of either French life or of French character. To semi-amused, semi-contemptuous spectators, France is the nation which above all others is dramatic, with a highly developed taste for sensation. Her methods of administering justice are peculiarly her own.

In this particular trial political passion was proved to be stronger far than the justice to be done to a dead editor. The witness box had been turned into a tribune, from which orators could hurl frenzied attacks on their political enemies. Tawdry political linen, soiled

and stained, of past scandals was seized, was shaken into shape of fresh invective, was exultingly exposed to the public gaze, for public condemnation. Intimate domestic and marital scenes passed before the amused eyes of the world with a cinematograph realism. All the earlier issues lost their edge of importance, however, when the will of the dead editor was produced and was read to a scandalized public; the will itself was proof sufficient to condemn Monsieur Calmette's base methods of securing his 13,000,000 of francs; but the presumably illegal working of the power vested in high government officials for possession of the document aroused France to a storm of indignant protest.

When the verdict of acquittal came, the scene in the courtroom—a scene of indescribable fury with its shouts and

cries of irrepressible rage, of impotent anger—was enacted on a vaster scale on the stage of political, religious and social France.

To the French clear, logical vision, it was as though France itself, its institutions, its courts of law and justice, had been on trial. Republican France seemed to confess openly her democratic form of government had gone down in failure. France felt herself stripped of her dignity; naked and ashamed, she was held up to be the mock of nations.

It was the hour for the triumph of the enemies of the government. Royalists and those young enthusiasts—the Cadets du Roi—could lift their heads; with this imminent collapse of the Republic the little heir of the Napoleon dynasty, son of a Belgian princess, might yet wear a crown. The Catholics

bewailed the decay of the faith; the awful spectacle of this lowering of all ideals of honor, of justice, was surely due to the separation of church and state; the systematic neglect of early religious training and revolt against clerical authority had shown France, by the most eloquent of proofs—results—the mistake of its policy of suppression. Socialists and Radicals in their turn rubbed their exultant hands; the more signs of decay in the social fabric, the easier it would be to overturn the tottering edifice.

There was, indeed, such an unchaining of the passions as seemed to prelude a revolutionary outburst. All the air was rife with prophecy. The actual Reign of Terror, one was told by alarmists, was not far off; the Marat of the coming Revolution would be he who had stood

in the witness box haranguing France and the world, parading his eloquence to prove his soiled hands clean—as leader of his party—rather than wasting valuable time in defence of his wife.

Such was the scene set upon the great French stage in those tragic days of the mid-week of July.



## CHAPTER III

### *The President's Visit to Russia*

**D**URING this period of excitement and of national demoralization, the head of the French Republic was conspicuously absent. As though to be safely out of the turgid plunge of things, President Poincaré, it was thought by many, had purposely arranged to pay at this critical time a series of visits to certain courts.

Future historians in describing the tragi-domestic episodes of the great trial, the chaotic conditions of French political life and the apparently unsettled

state of France—at this eventful period of her history—will pause, with a certain conscious rise of the pulse, when depicting the Presidential visit to Russia. Those writers gifted with the power of presenting an historic pageant with brilliant effect will be furnished with adequate material.

Beneath Russian skies magnificent fêtes were being given. The Czar of all the Russias was entertaining in the grand manner of court ceremonials so rapidly passing away, his friend and ally President Poincaré. The enormous silhouette of the “France,” bearing on board the French President, the Prime Minister, Monsieur Viviani and their suite, had slowly crept up, on a date destined to be of historic importance—on the 20th of July—had slowly made its way through a semi-cloud-burst to the haven of Cron-

stadt. At the moment of coming to anchorage the warm Russian sun flooded the gaily decked yachts, the cruisers and the steamers that crowded the waters as though to gild the impressive scene with a glow that should match the thundering welcome of the guns and the outburst of enthusiastic acclamations. At the moment of the meeting between the Czar and the President aboard the Imperial yacht, those thousands of Russians crowding the shores burst in impassioned joy into simultaneous chanting of the Russian hymn; and as the yacht "Alexandria" wended its way toward Peterhof, in both Russian and French ears there rang the equally stirring notes of the Marseillaise.

During the Presidential visit, fêtes and banquets were brilliant interludes to the graver business of the reviews of the fleet

and army and to the still weightier, more secret interviews of the heads of the two great states and of their ministers.

No one present was more capable of appreciating, both as a man of many worlds and in the truest artistic sense, the picturesque splendor of this Russian welcome than the French President. It has been said of him that "of all the French presidents, he is the first who is capable of judging a work of art from the artists' standpoint." The banquet tendered him by his Imperial host in the great hall of Peter the Great presented to the trained French eyes those contrasts that mark our century's progress in a levelling of the classes.

Against the fairy-like background of the famous Gobelin tapestries, pinks and gladioli repeated the delicate bloom of the woven threads. Above the glitter of the

massive silver service there shone a circlet of prismatic lights flashing from crowned heads and jewelled necks such as this Russian court alone can boast. The Empress and her court ladies lent their Russian grace and beauty as though to offset the rugged, massively-built figures of the Grand Dukes, Generals, Admirals, courtiers and grandees whose brilliant uniforms and jewelled orders rivalled the splendor of the ladies' toilettes.

Three soberly-clad Frenchmen were the guests of honor. President Poincaré's dull Republican black was relieved by the reds of the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor. Monsieur Delcassé's somewhat coarsely-modeled, but vividly brilliant face, instinct with the power of highly vitalized, intellectual forces; and Monsieur Vivani's plebeian but strongly-

featured countenance rose above the blacks and whites of their evening dress—blacks and whites sharply contrasting with the splendor of court costumes and gold wrought uniforms. Dress has been proven to indicate character and to illustrate historic periods. National and even ethical, as well as political movements—certain analysts find—are reflected in the dress of a people. Students of sociology would doubtless consider the Republican garb worn by the distinguished French guests at these imperial festivities indicative of triumphant democracy.

One tries to imagine, indeed, such a scene as the one presented at that magnificent banquet, before 1870. The leveling process begun in the assembling of the States General in Paris under the doomed Louis XVI was not to find its eventual triumph in an acceptance of the

great principal that a free people may be as strong and as valuable—as an ally—as a nation still governed by monarchical rule until Republican France had proved to Europe its potential, as well as its financial value. Great principles for their lasting benefits must rest upon a secure and solid basis. The French Revolution entered upon its true reformatory work after Sedan. The slow rise of France to a new power as a people dates from its most humiliating defeat.

From the political point of view, the presence of these three gifted Frenchmen at the Russian Court at this critical period of the Presidential visit was a fortunate circumstance. The work of the French Ambassador Monsieur Delcassé, at the Court of Petrograd, during the two years of his ambassadorial mission had been of such incalculable bene-

fit to French interests, to his country, as well as to the Franco-Russian Alliance that, as one of his admirers has said, "France will never know what it owes to Delcassé."

To President Poincaré the same tribute will eventually be paid. Possessed of the fighting quality of the soldier—he can review an army under fire and to the music of whistling shells,—Monsieur Poincaré is endowed with intellectual powers of a high order. His public speeches are the speeches of a statesman and of a scholar. He has the Frenchman's charm of manner; and he possesses also that exquisite French tact that lights upon the right word as a bee upon a flower. In appearance, he owes little to physical advantages. Yet in bearing, in speech and in gesture, the French President conveys the impression



of a certain distinction. The forces within have sculptured the physical envelope—have ennobled it.

In the epoch-making meeting of the two allies whose united action, together with that of England and Belgium is to determine the future of Europe, and for years to come, we may be sure that the weight of Monsieur Poincaré's personal influence, as well as the breadth of his political outlook will hereafter be made known. In every circumstance in life the personal equation plays its great rôle.

The first disquieting rumors of a possible war between Austria-Hungary and Servia were already disturbing the peace of European cabinets. The three distinguished Frenchmen then gathered together in the Russian capital were watching with nervous, apprehensive gaze those danger signals Austria was uplift-

ing before not only Servian, but European eyes.

The London *Times*, commenting on the "opportune presence of the French President at the Russian court," said:

"Monsieur Poincaré's visit, at the moment when words of menace and defiance are being hurled across the shores of the Danube, is a happy circumstance. His visit recalls to all the powers the base on which rests the peace of Europe, and the risks that a conflict will surely entail. This visit is the answer to the pretensions of certain Austrian polemics to the effect that the differences between Austria and Servia interest them alone, and that an armed conflict between them can be localized. Austria-Hungary is a party to the Triple Alliance, and as such, she cannot engage in a dangerous quarrel without exposing her partners to obvious

risks. We cannot believe that these three partners are disposed to allow themselves to be dragged into difficulties with a light heart."

With a light heart!

The words are freighted with sinister meaning.

"The light heart" was not the heart of Austria beating in feeble pulsations in the breast of an octogenarian Emperor doubly enfeebled by age and sorrows, nor in that of his semi-indifferent people. It was in the heart of the Kaiser, of his unruly, headstrong and ambitious heir, and, as we now know, in the heart of the German people, carefully, methodically educated and trained for this great moment, that there pulsed the bounding hope. The heart of all Germany was "light" indeed; it had been waiting for long years for this golden opportunity. On the old Emperor

Francis Joseph's hesitating hand when at the last he showed signs of wavering, of accepting terms of surrender from Servia—the Kaiser's mailed fist bore down on that wavering doubt with the clutch of the destroyer about to be robbed of his victim.

Meanwhile, the speeches interchanged between the Kaiser's "cousin" the Czar and President Poincaré must have yielded interesting reading to an "honorable" Emperor already quietly mobilizing his large army, according to that convenient "Kriegsgefahrzustand" which permits Germany to mobilize without declaring her intention to do so.

The assurances interchanged of the "confraternity which exists between our armies of the fleet and the field" as facilitating that "ideal of peace, which inspires our respective countries, conscious of

their forces;" the glasses lifted to toast "the strength and durability of our proven alliances, to preserve the equilibrium of Europe"—such noble sentiments must have evoked a pleased sense of grim, sardonic humor in the mind of the man who had already decided on a Romano-Germanic "conquest of the world." The Kaiser had also his ideal of peace; yes, but such peace as was to be purchased by the crushing and the massacring of half Europe, with promises of "happiness" to what remained of the maimed and ruined remnant.

## CHAPTER IV

### *A German View of France*

**A**S all the world now knows, Germany did indeed believe herself to be as thoroughly possessed of full knowledge for gauging France's possible strength and her more than known weaknesses, as she was also assured of the complete preparedness of her own superb and supposed-to-be irresistible army.

The world knows also the sources of this knowledge.

Germany's spies had been as carefully selected for their base work as they had been skilfully placed that they might

penetrate into the whole frame-work of French life.

Of late years many French families have found, with diminishing incomes, that a certain gratifying economy could be practiced by employing German servants. French nature is singularly unsuspecting unless it has grounds for suspicion. In its attitude toward Germany's wide-spread spy system, it proved itself, indeed, amazingly naïve. The modern, Republican Frenchman was actually incapable of divining the systematic working of a spy system sufficiently elaborate and sufficiently ignoble in spirit, to devise sending forth its ophidian mercenaries to crawl into the bosom of intimate family life, to eat their bread, and then betray them.

The French housewife found in her German maid, nurse, or governess of

her children those docile, industrious and amiable qualities with which, one must admit, German character is found to be endowed—when it is deemed expedient to make use of them—in a foreign country, under foreign pay.

How could the confiding mistress divine that on entering her service, the German servant had received a list of directions that were, in reality, commands from the German headquarters of her Secret Service? Regular reports were to be made, by such servants, of any conversations likely to interest the home government; details appertaining to the income, to the expenditures, as well as to the family and social status of the French master and mistress in whose household the German servant had taken service—all such useful in-



formation was to be regularly transmitted to headquarters.

Amplify this system as it has been worked out throughout France, with Germans spying into the naval, military, official, political, urban and suburban life of a people—a system that even utilized the advertisements of its soups and foodstuffs for furnishing future accurate directions to an invading army of every road, lane, high-road and château throughout the length and breadth of France—ought not a people capable of organizing such a comprehensive scheme for possessing accurate knowledge of every secret of a neighbor state, feel confident of an easy baiting of an enemy?

The Germans have proved themselves to be possessed of certain exceptionable qualities. Intuitive insight into the morale of another people or race, or a

broad, comprehensive view of race inheritances, traditions and of processes of mental and spiritual development differing radically from their own,—such gifts have been denied the Germans. Goethe himself summed up a certain mental density in his own people when he said “the Germans take things heavily.”

German spies have infested for years the intimate and official life of all Europe and Great Britain. This spy system was only second, in point of organization and control, to that of the army. For long years reports relating to every grade and class of society and officialdom, of her foreign neighbors, and those she counted as enemies, have been pouring into the German headquarters at Berlin. Yet no spy was able to predict what would be France's

attitude as a nation when she was attacked. No German could divine the true spirit of the Frenchman when there was a national crisis before him to face. There was no magic baguette to prove how deep ran the national, patriotic stream of passionate devotion to soil and country.

German baseness judged others capable of violating treaties, of accepting treacherous offers—with bribes—of stooping to infamous alliance against weaker states, by its own standards. What spy in England could gauge the stainless honor of Sir Edward Grey? Where was the sound reasoning of her servants in Belgium, that could not even discern the glimmerings of that passionate love of national independence that made a German invasion of her soil rouse every Belgian to defend it?

From her own somewhat naïve confessions adduced from the Kaiser's pompous speeches, and the many predictions relating to the dates when certain cities were to be captured, as well as from the testimony of German prisoners, Germany's ignorance relating to France and her military preparedness is astounding.

It was universally believed in Germany there was no great military genius to lead French valor, should her soldiers still be found to possess that older Gallic virtue. There was not even a Napoleon III. to rouse the national pride to suicidal bravery. And in point of equipment, the army was reported to be short of uniforms, of shoes even. Her stores of ammunition also were said to be ridiculously low. Crushing such an army was to be but an easy "walkover."

On the 5th of August, therefore, certain German reservists residing in France were notified to join their regiment, not on German soil, but at Rheims. On the 15th of the same month, others were to assist in the triumphal entry of the German army into Paris, led by the Crown Prince, the Kaiser's wonderful son, whom God was to support "magnificently" in certain later victories.

France was, therefore, considered as crushed before a gun was fired. She was thought to be in that friable state of decomposition that Venice was found to be in when Austria so easily subjugated her. At a touch of Germany's mailed fist the invertebrate Republic would crumble, as crumbles painted cardboard in an iron grasp. Germany, the whole nation, indeed, had been systematically trained to think of France

as at her lowest ebb, at the mercy of her hereditary instincts and inheritance. Degenerate, decayed, she had sunk to the lowest forms of vice. One needed but to make the tour of Montmartre after midnight or of her theatres, to witness exhibitions,—indecent, obscene—such as Berlin, in her somewhat grotesque efforts to rival Parisian depravity, had in vain attempted to imitate.

Through her widespread spy system; through the reports of her ambassadors, who preferred to present only such facts as would be agreeable to the autocratic mind of the Kaiser, Germany believed she was also in complete possession of all the proofs of weakness,—internecine, political, and military—that placed England out of the great game.

What an unhopèd-for series of internal disturbances in both these hated coun-

tries! How wonderously God, the only God, the God of William II and of Prussian destinies, had managed to complicate the political and domestic quarrels of France and England! Now was the long-awaited time to strike the great blow by this chosen man of God, the holier descendant of Alexander, of Caesar,—he who also had conquered Gaul,—and of Napoleon, whose chief military want of foresight was proven to have been his humiliation of Prussia, since from those bitter ashes had sprung, Phoenix-like, the resurrection of the mighty modern German Empire.

Can we blame the Kaiser for believing the finger of his God was pointing to the neutral frontier of Belgium as the open door to France?

Beyond that door, France was supposed to be waiting in trembling, in

an agony of fear. Her hastily mobilized army might be galvanized into terror-stricken heroics by hysterical shouts of "à Berlin! à Berlin!" To Berlin, undoubtedly, thousands of those abject, invertebrate creatures would go—but as prisoners of war.

In less than a fortnight the perfection of German training of the superb army led by the great "delight of the world"—her genius of an Emperor—would be proving to France what conquering power lay in a people, united, confident of possessing—"an excess of vigor, enterprise, idealism and spiritual energy, which qualifies it for the highest places, for governing the whole world, in a word."

Berlin would presently transform Paris into a highly moral play-ground for highly "cultured" Germans. Once this



culture, "made in Germany," had time to work its spiritualizing methods, vicious, decadent France, after having been brought to its knees, would rise up a wiser, sadder people. In the new character of a reformed rake, her salvation would be hastened by the uplift of the new German "religion,"—a religion which is based on the oldest of all forms of despotism—that of systematic oppression.

## CHAPTER V

### *The Assassination of Jaurès*

**A**S THOUGH the fates were in conspiracy to twist the threads of France's fortunes into still further hopeless entanglement, a second crime was committed in Paris whose consequences might have proved to be of the gravest possible results to national French unity.

A pistol shot rang out on the night of July 31st, across a café table, in Montmartre.

Monsieur Jaurès, the greatest of French Socialists and perhaps the most gifted

French orator since Gambetta, was seated in a corner of a café, the centre of a company of friends. Two French deputies, Messieurs Longuet and Renaudel, the administrators of "L'Humanité"—the famous Socialist paper—and Herr George Weill, the Socialist Deputy of the Reichstag, were quietly discussing the stirring events of the day. The curtain screening the window close to which Jaurès was seated was torn away from the outside. Two shots were fired point blank at the Socialist leader and Monsieur Jaurès fell, unconscious, across the table on which a second before he had been leaning. His dead body a few minutes later was taken away by his friends.

The power exercised by Jaurès over the great body of French Socialists and Radical-Socialists was due to a combination of gifts and qualities such as an advocate

of ideas and principles destined to revolutionize society must possess to be accepted as a leader of men. Jaurès' career marked him from his first appearance as a young man, teaching philosophy as early as 1883 at Albi—he was born at Castres, in the southern province of Taru, in 1859—as a man with an assured future. His election as deputy for his province in 1885 gave him his first chance to prove his powers as an orator. At this period of his intellectual development, his opinions both on social and political matters were still in that somewhat nebulous state peculiar to processes of mental transition. Eight years were to pass before Jaurès was to come to complete understanding of his own fluctuating convictions, reflections and philosophic conclusions. Elected by the miners of Taru whose cause he had espoused dur-

ing the famous Carmaux strikes, he proclaimed to the spell-bound Chamber of Deputies in 1893, through the power wielded by a born leader of revolutionary ideas and by an orator possessed of trained faculties and gifts of the highest order—his political attitude. His radicalism all but touched the ground held by Anarchists. As a man, Jaurès' deep-seated sincerity of character could not be doubted even by his enemies.

Since his entrance into political life, Jaurès unquestionably held the one stable, secure seat in that French Chamber too famous for sudden eclipse of power. Every Minister on entering into office knew he must reckon with Jaurès. And behind the great leader there was the formidable, ever-growing army of the Socialists and the Radical-Socialists who, however much they might be divided by

family quarrels, in moments of attack were united to a man behind the man who led them from victory to victory.

Jaurès' eloquence has been likened to that of Gambetta.

The same richly colored, vibrant, sonorous phrases poured forth with southern impetuosity and fecundity, felicitous imagery, and scholarly, classical allusion characterized the speeches of both these gifted sons of the Midi. Judged from the point of view of pure eloquence, Jaurès was easily the most gifted orator France has produced since Gambetta. He could be answered; but his opponents found no weapons of defense or attack to equal that matchless gift that is the heritage of the great speaker.

In the killing of Jaurès, the assassin's crime had for its echo the startled cry of the civilized world. The ring of the

murderer's bullet must have sounded as the last convincing note to assure Germany of France's complete demoralization. French Socialists, it was speciously argued, in their righteous anger at the committing of as heinous a crime, could now no longer be counted upon; to a man, they would refuse to obey their government's call to arms.

Jaurès' power, even after his death, was proved by the devotion of his followers to their lost leader.

The very night before the brutal assassination of Jaurès, the French President had requested his presence at a meeting of some of the members of the Council. Jaurès was then informed, some days before the country was to know the worst, of what was surely to happen; of how poor a chance the negotiations going on in London promised for maintaining the

peace of Europe; of how tremendous would be the odds against France, in case of war, were she to be unsupported by England; and of what fate awaited the country were she not to present an undivided front, to the dread enemy.

“Every one of you Socialists must be with us,” rang in Jaurès’ ears.

Every Socialist, the great orator, the master-mind of his party instantly decreed, should fly to the colors. The awful prospect of France Prussianized, of a possible German Dictatorship was a spectre sufficiently terrifying to chill the blood of the man who, more than any other had preached Internationalism; who, more than any other had opposed the Three Years’ Army Bill; who, more than any other had used his all but Demosthenian eloquence to stain the Lily of France with the blood of mistaken



martyrdom. But once the great test applied, deep in the soul of every Frenchman there will be found the root of the patriot.

That very night Jaurès wrote his greatest article. In calling on his thousands of followers to rally to the flag, to answer to the bugle call of patriotism, he proved himself worthy to be ranked with heroes. He flung down the incendiary torch of the destroyer to unsheath the Periclean sword of the patriot.

Socialists, Anarchists even, responded to a man to their great leader's impassioned appeal.

The blow to Socialistic hopes that has been thus struck by French, and later by German, Russian and English Socialists, is a cruel one; the whole movement indeed it is openly acknowledged by Internationalists, has been hard hit. Social-

ists, in all the armies, are fighting each other like Nationalists.

“In France the movement collapsed utterly, though only two weeks before the war the French Socialist party voted to recommend to an international congress to be held in Vienna, an international general strike, in case of war. But war was declared too soon, and nothing came of the movement; Jules Guesde entered the cabinet together with Millerand to save the Republic and to fight against the traitor workmen of Germany,” was a resumé of the situation, in a socialist newspaper.

The pregnant fact that behind the Socialist there lies the man—the elemental, primitive human being—has been forgotten by the Socialist Leaders. When one’s wife, children, home, and the fruits of one’s labor and toil stand in danger of

being attacked, mutilated, looted and confiscated, a Socialist returns to his primal instincts. Peace doctrines are for peace times.

## CHAPTER VI

### *The Week of Dread*

**U**NLESS one had lived in France during the eight days of dread and suspense before the actual declaration of war, it would be difficult to conceive of the tension among all classes of Frenchmen.

Europe and Great Britain had been roused already to the fever point of excitement by the ultimatum addressed by Austria-Hungary to Servia. Its meaning could not be misunderstood. Its all but insulting demands meant war. Yet hope rose high with every varying phase of the peace negotiations.

Hope leaped high, indeed, when the announcement was made that Austria appeared to listen, with an appearance of yielding, to Russia's proposals; not fear, but an enlightened dread of the awful consequences haunted the soul of every Frenchman when Serbia's answer—remarkable alike for its temperance, its dignity and its acquiescent spirit—to Austria's all but insulting ultimatum was replied to by Austria's declaration of war.

On every highroad, at every village café, at every dinner or luncheon, in villa or château throughout the length and breadth of France, passionate were the lengthy discussions, interrupted were all forms of pleasure or even of continuous labor. The very air was vibrant with intensified feeling.

In my garden in Normandy during this long, anxious week, very little work

was done. The gardeners rested on their rakes or spades to make prolonged discussion of the situation the easier; and their shears, I noticed, were chiefly used for effective, illustrative gesture. The chauffeur still burnished the brasses of his car, but more vigorous than his elbow work were the explosive prophesies of the punishment to be given the first German who offered his "gueule" for a target. The farmers busily cutting their grain went to the fields with the morning papers in their corduroy trousers' pocket.

The genius of the French for clear insight; the talent everywhere displayed throughout all classes in France for clever handling of political situations, and the remarkable grasp of an intelligent understanding of broad national issues were never more conspicuously proven, and by all classes of French-

men, than during that long week of suspense.

The comparative strength of the armies of Europe was guessed with astonishing accuracy; the power of the various fleets was gauged; the destructive character of German and French arms was weighed; but above all else, the question that hung aloft in the mid-air of misty conjecture was one fraught with nebulous doubt.

Would England fight?

That Russia would rush to the defense of her Slav interests and her Slav brethren was taken for granted. But England?

Her attitude was viewed with grave distrust.

Whatever sense of security may have been felt by the heads of the French government, the French people to a man were skeptical of England's be-

lieving her best interests lay with France. The usual stock phrases were mouthed; "Perfide Albion;" "We'll be crushed, pulling her chestnuts out of the fire." "Her King, when he was here, even he, when the President pressed him for a decisive answer to assert the closer knitting of the Entente Cordiale, could only reply, for mere courtesy's sake, in evasive phrases."

France thus voiced her distrust of her neighbor across the Channel. There was a chill and a shudder that passed from one end of the country to the other; for were France to support, unaided, the full shock of the German armies, what might not be her fate?

When, on August 12th, through the pearly mists of early morning, those of us who could look out upon the gradually lighted dawn shining on the Havre



seas to catch the first glimpse of the English transports slowly making their way to harbor, what a thrill shot through the soul of every on-looker! The Calvados shores rang with welcoming shouts. The whole Norman coast was alive with breathless, excited multitudes.

The vessels had crept up with the silence and secrecy rather of foes than as the forerunners of the mighty English army that was to help France hold her own.

Never was an ally more warmly met. Never were soldiers of two races so dissimilar, in traits and temperament, to fraternize as quickly. "Mon petit comrade" was the customary affectionate greeting of a diminutive French "piou-piou," to an English Tommy nearly twice his size, as, linked arm in arm, the two would wend their way to café or to barracks.

The real secret of this first landing of English troops was an open one to Havre, to Normandy and to Paris, many days before the loyal English Press—pledged to guard the starting forth of the army—announced it to the English nation.

The continuous coming of the English ships, thus unannounced, gave our modern Normandy world the startled surprise that must have been experienced by mediaeval or Renaissance peoples in the sudden appearance of succoring friend or war-like foe.

In the case of this English ally, surprise was only exceeded by the quick joy, by the sense of an almost nameless gratitude in finding England living up to her best conceptions of high duty. Historians even now are darkening that bright picture by insisting England's fighting

Germany on the rather thin plea of thus honoring her signature to a scrap of paper, is but a screen to veil her own more ambitious and destructive designs.

Whatever revelations future historical records may have in store for us, the coming of the English troops to Havre, and later on to Ostend and to Boulogne, gave France her first profound thrill of cheer. She was not alone! England and Belgium would, united with her own armies, assure ultimate victory. Her Russian ally would hold the German hordes in the East.

France was under no illusions as to what was to come to her were she to be unsuccessful in her attempt to guard her own soil, and to protect her liberties unaided. As Alfred Capus so strikingly asserted in a leading article in the *Figaro*: "We had all seen, at one and

the same time—with a blinding clarity had we seen—that with the formidable German horde descending upon us we must expect a return to barbarism. It is a barbarism which is waiting to reconquer and to throttle Europe, as the first invasions from the East descended upon the Roman world.”

Even before Germany's policy of terrorism and her long prepared, ambitious project for world conquest had been as fully revealed to the nations as they have been within the past five months, the clear-sighted, analytic French mind had grasped the inner meaning and menace of the German invasion.

It is one of the defective policies in a Republican form of government that the heads of the State cannot always act on knowledge gained through diplo-

matic sources. That the French government had been warned, since or even before 1912, of Germany's warlike preparations and of her firm intention to invade France were she pushed by Russia's equally warlike preparations to break the long peace, is more or less an open secret. The only effective action that could be taken by France partially to prepare herself for Germany's dreaded attack, was to vote the Three Years' Army Bill. With her usual talent for distorting facts, Germany announced in the Reichstag, in 1913, when her Chancellor demanded an increase of both her war fund and her army, that France's threatening act in making the Three Years' Compulsory service a law made this demand imperative. Germany seems to ignore the teaching of one of the oldest of all

maxims—one that Lincoln phrased in his famous dictum that “You can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can’t fool all the people all the time.” In our day truth is the wisest of all policies, since through the press, the cable, the telegraph, the rapidity of swift displacement, and the publishing of the motley colored Yellow, Grey, Blue and White Books, the world may be immediately informed of facts that in former years patient historians devoted their lives to unearthing.

There are those—and they are many in America—who still contend France went into this war primarily because of her alliance with Russia. The terms of her treaty with her powerful ally exacted, it is true, the support of France in case of Russia going into a war. But the people of France—her fighting pop-

ulation, her armies, in a word, felt and knew it to be *her own war with Germany*.

France wanted war neither with Germany nor with any other nation. The long years of peace within her own territory had developed the delights and contentment peace breeds. The memories even of her humiliating defeat in 1870 had been softened by her subsequent victories in the field of diplomacy, by the increase of her commerce, by her industrial prosperity, and by her financial importance. The longing to recapture her lost provinces—Alsace and Lorraine—was rather a desire colored by sentiment than one vibrating to the touch of revenge. The younger generation that had grown up to manhood since Napoleon III's downfall could be roused to instantaneous enthusiasm, it is true, at the call of patriotic

allusions to a possible recovery of the captured provinces; but this new France would have had to feel itself numerically twice or thrice as strong before a government could successfully be supported in any attempt to make war on Germany for the sole purpose of re-taking Alsace and Lorraine.

That France as a whole nation fronted the possibility of war with dismay bordering on dread was sufficiently proved by her attitude during the tragic days when the so-called Peace negotiations were going on in London. At every turn of the diplomatic game France was alternately swayed by the fluctuating tides of hope and fear.

These waves of passion-strung feeling had been intensified by the recent political, religious and socialistic crises through which the country had passed. The



Caillaux trial; the absence of the head of the French government, during this period of stress and strain; and the assassination of Jaurès—the great Socialist Leader—had kept all France in a state of nervous and excited tension for a long fortnight before she was called upon to face one of the gravest situations in her historical experience.

With Jaurès assassinated, indeed, a conjunction of the planetary forces was felt, doubtless, to be in direct collusion with Germany's plans for the coming war that was "to be fought for the highest interests of our (her) country and of mankind."

As yet neither France nor, indeed, had Europe become familiarized with these benevolent designs of a God-directed Emperor.

## CHAPTER VII

### *France—The Living Sword*

**I**N one of the most eloquent calls to arms ever made by a chief of state to a nation, President Poincaré thus addressed France, on Sunday, August 2d:

“In spite of the efforts of diplomacy, the situation in Europe within a few days has been aggravated.

“The horizon has darkened. At the present moment most of the nations have mobilized their armies; even countries protected by neutrality have deemed it necessary to resort to this act as a precautionary measure.”

The message went on to state that "one of the powers" had already mobilized, without issuing a decree of mobilization; that France who had always reiterated her desire for peace, who had during these tragic days given Europe counsels in moderation and a living example of wisdom, who had multiplied her efforts to maintain the peace of the world, now saw herself forced to take preliminary measures to safeguard her territory.

After stating "that mobilization is not war" the President ended by saying that "I count on the sang-froid of this noble nation not to allow itself to be excited by an unjustifiable emotion. I count on the patriotism of all Frenchmen, and know that there is not one who is not ready to do his duty.

"At this hour, there are no parties, there is a France—a France peace-

loving and resolute. There is a country of right, of justice, proving its united spirit of calm, vigilance and dignity.”

This declaration was signed by all the Ministers as well as by the President.

All the world knows the response of France to that appeal.

On the walls of every city in France, in every village, in every hamlet, the order of mobilization was posted. Everywhere, throughout the length and breadth of the country, the same scenes were enacted. Groups of men gathered thick about the posters, read their orders, and after interchanging remarks with the nearest neighbor, they would turn away silently with serious faces but with eyes aflame to carry the news to their families.

In my parish of Vasouy the scene I witnessed only a few moments after the order was posted was a typical one.

The diminutive Mairie of our parish of two hundred souls is perched on a rise of ground overlooking the sea. Adjoining the Mairie there stands a huge stone cross on its base of worn steps.

About the railing of the Mairie, the men and women from the adjacent farms were thickly grouped. Children clung to their mother's skirts. Some of the fathers had the babe of the year sitting cross-wise on their shoulders; it was Sunday, and this call to arms had surprised many on their customary saunter along the Normandy highroad.

“Ça y'est !”

This was cried, almost in chorus, as the men looked—and stared.

There was a moment's silence, and then a nervous laugh broke the stillness. A man near me—a farmer whose wife and child were beside me, called out through his hoarse laughter, "Eh bien!—la grosse! I go to protect thee—it seems!" And he put his arm about the wife, whose eyes were filled with tears, but whose lips smiled—the brave smile!

"Yes, that's it! We must fight for our children—for the country! What's your regiment? What arms do you use?"

Every man forgot his momentary stagger of mingled surprise and consternation in eager discussion of his military rank and destination. There were hurried handclasps, a few Hurrahs! many cheerful "A bientôt"—"A demains" and the groups separated, crying "Vive la France!"

The women were as brave as calm. Only one or two showed traces of emotion. And one of them had cause for tears. "Thou'll never see the babe—Jules," a farmer's wife said, as she put her browned hand in her husband's.

"Nonsense. I'll be bringing thee Berlin wools for a jacket in a month or two," was the gayly-voiced answer.

Hour by hour that tide of courageous bravery rose higher and higher. It carried the men through the short twenty-four hours' preparation for an indefinite departure; it lifted the spirit of the man who must leave wife and children to an uncertain fate, to smile as he strained them in farewell; it drowned out all personal interest; it swept all France into an exaltation of patriotic enthusiasm. It surprised even the most discerning of Frenchmen to discover such rare, such

superb moral and spiritual qualities in their people. That a people so quick to feel, so intensely emotional, so dangerously excitable should be capable of such sane common sense, of conforming immediately to strict discipline, of being possessed—as by magic—of a unified will, animated by a single and clearly understood purpose—this revelation of the France that had been developed during the forty years peace was as great a surprise to thinking Frenchmen as it was to be to the outer world.

The trains carrying the men to their destination were garlanded with flowers; the scenes of farewell at the stations, heartrending though some were, were amazingly unemotional as a whole in outward expression. Women smiled into the smiling faces of lover or husband; fathers lifted children in their arms as



though at play; even bent old peasant women, as they clasped son or grandson, in farewell, turned the tragedy into a joke.

The mocking French spirit that so often hides deep feeling was indeed not wanting from certain scenes.

A fine looking man, the clever Honfleur plumber, looking every inch the hero in his cuirassier's uniform, came along the Honfleur platform to entrain, his wife hanging to his arm. "Mon homme! mon homme!—thou goest from me!" the latter was wailing, between her bursting sobs. "Her man" looked on the bowed head, his indulgent smile half loving, half malicious. "Hum, it appears love is in the air—in the war-times. Thou were'nt as loving as all that yesterday morning when we had our quarrel!" But he strained her to his heart the moment after, before entering his car.

One might have thought the interminable line of cars rather decked for a gigantic wedding festivity than carrying soldiers off to battle.

Flowers were everywhere; diminutive squat bouquets flourished from the men's breasts and caps; branches of trees were tied to door handles; marigolds and phlox adorned the fillets into which provident wives and mothers had crammed cigarettes and socks, bread and a change of underclothes—and also those unlovely but solacing bits of flannels—those merciful protectors of little Mary.

The patriotic ardor that inspired the Japanese women during their heroic struggle with Russia to glory rather in the death of their beloved than to contemplate their coming back defeated, thrills the heart of every French mother,

of every wife who has seen son or husband sing his way to battle.

“My wife wrote me, come home crippled, be brought back dead, but come home victorious” was quoted me, as the oft-repeated appeal of a Japanese wife to her husband, a hero of Port Arthur.

This Spartan courage was matched by the spirited outburst of a certain countess who stood beside me on the platform of the Honfleur station. We were watching the long train slowly winding its way, bearing the first soldiers entrained in our region of Calvados. The lady's two sons were bending half out of the car window, striving to catch the last glimpse of the upright figure beside me. My friend's cheeks were white with grief and the inward dread she would not voice. But her lips and voice were firm.

“If only they come back victorious,” she said, and she turned to put her arm about the bowed form of a peasant woman, who was furtively wiping the tears coursing down the bronzed cheeks. “Allons, la mère—we must save our tears for the day when crying will be our only comfort.”

She walked the old woman off to her *char-à-banc*, knowing action is grief’s best anodyne.

Before the train had left the station, some of the soldiers had burst into snatches of song. One by one, the men took up the familiar notes. That stirring call “Allons, enfants de la Patrie” soon swung into air, a thunderous shout. Triumphant, exultant—for are not the children of France at last marching to their long-awaited revenge for Sedan? that swelling chorus has been ringing up to French skies for long months: from Mar-

seilles to Calais, from the French Vosges to the rock-bound coast of Brittany, as on one memorable day Paris heard it, a continuous song from the Bastile to the Arc de Triumphe. That melodious militant music has swept the sensitive, emotional harp of French feeling, striking the mighty patriotic chord that has made all France one.

This spirit of meeting a grave crisis with confident gayety, has not deserted the French soldier at the front. His raillery, his talent for seeing the humorous side of a situation, his quick wit is the leaven that makes light of even the horrors of life in the trenches.

The women left at home have shown since the war began a Lacedemonian courage. They have stepped into the vacant places as though born to the task of the running of a farm alone, unaided,

or of a hotel, or the direction of the family fortunes. No task seems to be beyond their capacity or power of adaptation. Every woman in France is now working. She turns her hand to whatever duty or task lies before her.

When the horses, carts and vehicles of all sorts were requisitioned, along the country roads women old and young, girls even, led many of the horses from the farm or the spirited teams from their master's stables to the judging posts. One might have thought one's self at Longchamps, or in the paddock of the Deauville race-course. All was as orderly, as composed, as though every valuable horse had his master or coachman as showman.

The Frenchwoman among the working classes is trained for service of some sort. To take the command of a household, of

a business even, is only in many instances a case of promotion. The dot system in France has given women equal interests in the management of the family fortune. She steps as easily into the place of power as she understands how not to appear to usurp it. The Frenchwoman of the lower middle and peasant or working-women's class I believe to be the most completely equipped woman in our modern society.

It is she who will silently, prudently, untiringly repair by her industry and thrift the disastrous devastation caused by the war.

The magnificent courage she is now showing proves her training—and her piety. The Frenchwoman is the scabbard of what Michelet called France—“The living sword.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Paris When the Germans were at Compiègne*

**A**T certain crises in the life of a nation, the slow deposit of the years necessary to forge new forces in character proves the results attained. The spirit animating modern Frenchmen; the gain in self-control; the power of acting with an American initiative; and the newborn respect for authority—when such authority is felt to exercise its right to safeguard the nation—all these fine qualities that have been slowly crystallizing during the past forty odd years were conspicuously displayed



during the panic in Paris, when the Germans were known to be at Compiègne.

During the three or four days of flight of a million or more Frenchmen, women, and the foreigners still left in Paris—that city may be said to have been, indeed, in a state of panic; but it was a most orderly, civilized panic. There was hurry, but no confusion: there was the tremor of uncertainty born of dread, but there was no fear displayed: there was tearful farewells; but those who were condemned to remain in Paris—possibly to endure a long siege—showed the braver face; even at the stations, the chorus was “Au revoir!” “A bientôt!”

The larger part of the well-to-do were indeed, in flight; but one might have thought these Parisians were only in a greater haste than common to hurry to the sea-coast for the September out-

ing—that chosen holiday season “pour les petites bourses, qui cherchent les petits trous pas chers.”

I went up to Paris, on August 29th, from my country place in Normandy. Paris, I found on my arrival, presented an entirely new face. Streets and boulevards were all but deserted. Most of the shops were already closed. One passed drawn shutters and tightly-locked iron doors, on which one read “fermé pour cause de mobilisation.” The Rue de la Paix looked a graveyard of finery. The Champs Elysées could not be crossed, at any hour of the day or night, without the uncanny sense of its being a death-trap. The few passers-by one met eyed one with curious, intent gaze; in every foreigner Parisians saw a possible German spy. Could one blame them?

A single, friendly gesture, however, could disarm suspicion. I remember hurrying down a side street near the Arc de L'Etoile: I was reading the headlines in *Le Temps*' single sheet. A certain paragraph arrested my attention. I stopped. A voice at my elbow asked, in gentle tones:

“Il y a des nouvelles—Madame?”

The face that was lifted to mine with its anxious eyes and grave, controlled lips told its story. Here was a mother or wife, with her beating heart, close beside me. As I read on to that gentle-faced lady, one by one the passers-by stopped—drew near to listen. When the audience grew to the somewhat terrifying number of fifteen or more, I passed the newspaper to an elderly gentleman. I had been fortunate in my choice. The gentleman possessed a

nicely modulated voice; the resonant tones seemed to amplify the meagre lines of the official communiqué to a reassuring fullness. When he stopped and passed me the sheet, his bow—as he lifted his hat—might have been the recaptured grace of lost eighteenth century manners.

The little circle lingered on. Everyone spoke to their nearest neighbor. The confessed advance of the German army, by the government—as far as Soissons—was gravely discussed. A burly grocer, his white apron and huge basket poised on his head, proclaimed two patent facts; that his “garçons” were at the front and that he, the patron, obviously over age, was his own errand boy. This portly individual announced “The Germans will never get to Paris: our forts are the strongest in the world.”

“They’re twenty-five miles beyond the city,” cried exultingly a lad in his early teens, a cigarette dangling between his rosy lips to prove his long smoking habit.

“If only they respect our monuments,” was the contribution of an elderly matron of serene aspect. She, perhaps, had memories of 1870 to nurse a belief Germans were still gentlemen of the nobler type of the Von Moltkes, and of the first German Emperor’s period.

“Ah—the fighting there’ll be before the forts!” The gentle-faced lady’s voice sounded like a knell. Its accents of subdued dread and sadness told on the little crowd. She bore unflinchingly the eyes that instinctively were turned on her; she responded to the unuttered sympathy she felt rising about her. With a smile touchingly sweet, but

one bereft of life or joy, that was like a courtesy in its comprehensive sweep, she went her way. As I watched the outlines of the tall shapely frame melting into the tender greys of the Paris street, the droop of the slender shoulders, the controlled dignity of the step, and the bent head seemed to symbolize future womanhood in France. Thus would it meet its coming bereavement with accepted resignation,—lighted by a smile.

For two days Paris lived on in this unnatural calm. Its effect on the mind was that of the stupefying, slumberous monotony of a provincial town. The million or more of soldiers who had passed through Paris from the provinces to the front had long since been entrained. There was still some show of animation at the Gare du Nord and at the other stations; supplies, horses, guns

and ambulance stores were continually sent on to follow the armies. But the life of the Paris streets was as sluggish as that of a dammed stream. Even the "Ouvroirs"—the shops opened by ladies to supply idle working girls and women with means of livelihood—were pathetic spectacles. I can still recall the deep-voiced cry of a gabereen-garmented merchant of unguents in the bazaar at Constantinople: "Where, O Lord, where are the buyers?" The accents were freighted with a biblical intensity.

The serious-faced French women, seated behind the overflowing "Ouvroirs" counters might well have echoed that lament. The shops were full of chiffon fineries, but empty. There were no buyers left in Paris.

The life of Paris—its gaiety, its brilliance, its yield of rich and picturesque

contrasts, its multiform activities were all as dead—as much a part of past memories—as though the great city had been stricken by some new form of paralysis.

On Sunday, late in the afternoon of August 31st, Paris, as by a miracle, woke up. She became, almost in an hour, as though electrified by a dynamic shock that stirred her to her very vitals. The Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, the Champs Elysées, the broad avenues and tributary smaller streets were suddenly choked with rapidly moving vehicles of all sorts. Through all that long, mild August night and for the following three or four days strange were the sights one looked upon. The great thoroughfares were a phantasmagoria, a packed, conglomerate mass of automobiles, ambulance wagons, aeroplanes, cars, auto-taxis—the latter



crowded to the last limit of space—and of motor trucks filled with soldiers or with guns. Had the familiar sign in England been the label attached to hundreds of the automobiles—"Families Removing"—one might the better have comprehended the heterogeneous gathering of live-stock, pets, and human beings filling the cars. Trunks and band-boxes were crowded into the interior of automobiles; ladies were clutching tiny dogs, and children were gravely holding dolls or a bird-cage. I saw a cat and her kittens contentedly sharing the broad lap of a "nou-nou," while her sleeping charge lay crosswise on her arm. Such was the odd assortment one might see perched on the top of a hat-box, or crowded together on the closed hood of a landaulet—to give the more room for luggage.

What curious change had transformed Paris? Had the order come from the Minister of War for demolition of more houses in the danger zone, about Paris? Was this agitation proof of a new, a more serious trouble? Was Paris itself in danger?

Paris!

As one's eyes travelled down the length of that great stretch of verdure we know as the Champs Elysées; of its grey-faced façades,—of that street that is a city in itself, with its theatres, cafés, children's playground, hotels, the private houses with their sculptured doors and windows, its shops and palaces—the street that begins its existence to the music of the playing fountains, to end it in the majestic Arc de l'Etoile—the whole in perfect drawing—could one look upon the Champs Elysées bathed

in the glow of an amber sunset, and not have one's heart seem to miss its beat, as one thought of this playground of all the world in danger of vandal desecration?

It was at a little restaurant in the Avenue Victor Hugo that the explanation of the sudden revival of life in the Paris streets was given us.

We were three who sought the brilliantly lighted interior of a restaurant one had passed hundreds of times and had never noticed. The same was doubtless true of the motley crowd that filled the tables. One recognized the faces familiarized by watching them at dinners or suppers at the Ritz-Carlton, at Ciro's, or at Paillard's. There were several of those elderly gentlemen who line the red benches of every good eating-house in the French capital. A few had brought

their wives and daughters. There was a group of French soldiers in uniform; among them was an officer, whose clanging sword and shining spurs created a distinct impression on a bevy of those "little ladies" (who are so often the reverse of little), and without whom no French restaurant, even in war times, would be complete. The attention of all the tables was immediately concentrated on the group that symbolized to every Frenchman present, army, flag and country. One almost expected to hear the murmurous exclamations break out into an "Hurrah!" or a simultaneous chanting of the Marseillaise.

The handsome young soldiers presently suffered an eclipse of popular favor.

The glass doors of the café were suddenly thrown open; a crowd of well-dressed, but somewhat strangely

appareled gentlemen and ladies attracted every eye. The prominent figure of the group was that of one of the Foreign Ministers. This latter gentleman was at once surrounded. One of the gentlemen of our party returned from greeting the Minister with a rather fixed smile and the air of a man charged with news.

"We know now the secret of what has happened to Paris," he said quietly, as he spread his napkin.

"The Germans are at Compiègne."

At that startling announcement the champagne seemed to stop sizzling. Those at the tables nearest us were still—rigid with intensity of interest.

The Minister, our friend went on, had been visiting some friends at Compiègne. Many of those assembled at the Château had been playing tennis. Bells were heard suddenly ringing throughout the

town. Cries in the streets deafened the ear:

“The Germans are coming!”

“Les Boches sont là, sauvez-vous! sauvez-vous!”

The sinister cry rang out like a death-knell throughout the city.

“The ladies, it appears, took time only to secure their jewels. Everything else was left behind in that superb château—there will be some rich looting! People were in their cars in a few seconds. Nothing was thought of but flight. Those who could not command an auto have been forced to remain. Such is the strength of the advancing German army—his Excellency tells me he could hear the tramping, the steady, persistent tramping of the army along the resonant macadam, as they themselves stopped for a second or two

outside of the town. Yet the Germans were still several miles away.”

Again, after the first gasp of amazed horror, the clutching thought came—Paris! Would the forts hold? Was the Paris army ready for its great task? Would those destroyers—the great German siege guns—reduce Paris, spoil its lovely face, its modernized, Athenian beauty—as Liège had been all levelled to a dust-bin, to ashes?

The last laughter one was to hear in Paris for many a day was that which had greeted the entrance of the soldiers. All the tables were silent enough now. There was a perfect composure and calm; but mirth had died out in the hearts of these Parisians.

The stars in the Paris sky that night, as we slowly walked homeward, were blurred. The shadow of fear

seemed to have crept into the darkened streets. The ear was haunted by the threatened tramp, tramp of that menacing army. Did Rome hear the feet of the hurrying millions of Huns, rushing onward to annihilate its splendor? Was Paris, the richest jewel of beauty on all this ever-turning, ever changing world, to have its glory blotted out, by these later Vandals from the North?

The awful spectre of fear came out of the fastnesses of the night and loomed large, laying down beside one, close to one's pillow. Never had a fate as cruel, as unjust, as unrelenting in its destructive possibilities been seen with clearer vision.



## CHAPTER IX

### *Paris on the Eve of Capture*

**W**ITH the thrilling news that the German armies were at Compiègne, only fifteen miles distant from the capital, the whole city, as we have seen, had been thrown into a state of panic. That precipitous flight of over a million, in two days' time, to the interior of the country towards Tours, towards Normandy, towards the coast or Bordeaux, was the happier lot, as I have said, of the comparatively favored few.

What of the millions left behind? What was to be their fate? What hopes, fears,

apprehensions filled the minds of perhaps the most sensitive, intelligent, imaginative people of any modern capital?

As hour after hour passed, between the dates of August 31st and that day in early September when Paris awoke to learn the army of General von Kluck was retreating, not an inhabitant of the French capital but had passed through the varying phases common to passion-wrought emotion. The heart and mind of every Parisian were alternately wrung by an anguish of fear, of awed dread, as they also leapt to the sudden, uplifting hope that, at the worst, Paris might be called upon to sustain a long siege, as was the case in the war of 1870. It was known throughout the city that all the houses within a certain radius in the suburbs had already been razed,

orders having been issued some days before.

The sad-faced, bewildered looking procession of the dispossessed had begun to pass into the city from the danger zones between the outer forts and Paris. The tightening grip of dread seemed to clasp the closer every Parisian who looked on the passing carts, laden donkeys, weary foot-passengers, and desolate-eyed women—the latter seated in the midst of hastily packed, heterogeneous masses of household goods in every variety of vehicle. Here was the stricken advance guard flying before the army of occupation, terribly significant of what Paris might have to suffer, might surely have to face.

Were the expected siege to be a long one—well—Paris, it was confidently asserted, at least would not starve. Her

stores of supplies were said to be all but inexhaustible. And, for a long while, there would be the rich open country towards the South, from which to draw supplies. No, Paris would not starve. There would be no necessity laid upon her of looking forward to the time when horse-meat would be considered a luxury, and a rat would sell as high as a hare in peace days. There might not always be a chicken in the pot; but one could confidently count on the appetizing leek and a bit of a toothsome joint. And of salads—that crisp vegetable and beverage in one—there would be no end.

Thus Paris gossiped and talked—and shivered. For it is certain that, whatever might have been the knowledge possessed by those in authority as to the protective strength and resources of the forts and the army, the people of Paris

were as ignorant of what efforts were being made to save the city as was the country at large.

For years France had been convinced the forts surrounding Paris could never be taken. But the wide range of the huge German siege guns and their destructive effects on Belgian towns had demolished the hopeful theory that those outer forts would hold before a single German gunman had taken up his position to sight his guns on Paris. If the forts could not withstand the invader's guns, what was left? What hope was there of the armies of General Joffre, of the English army, holding off the rapidly approaching hordes of the Germans? If the enemy could get as near to Paris as Compiègne, what was to prevent their triumphant on-rush to Paris?

Besides the dreaded hordes of the "barbarians"—hordes it was well known now were as destructive, as cruel, as remorseless in their methods of warfare as were the conquering Huns in their wanton despoiling of the Roman capital, as pictured to us by historians—besides the ruthless German armies, there were other horrors to be feared. A raid of the Zeppelin fleets sailing the skies might wreck what was left of Paris after the monster siege guns had trained their fire on architectural masterpieces and had made the Paris streets a burial-ground of wrecked homes and ruined civic buildings.

Was Paris to suffer the destruction already meted out to Liège, to Namur? The thought of what fate held in store, perhaps, for this City of Beauty,—for the city that lures the civilized world, as

Athens charmed the antique world—this possibility of evil coming to her, made every passerby along the strangely silent streets—the hurrying, elderly postman; the painted, professional seekers of men, anxious-eyed now, wistful, of doubly pathetic aspect; the belated suburban, hastening to his train; the slipping, furtive shapes of tramps; and the shopkeepers, gloomily shutting down windows whose wares had tempted no buyers,—every man or woman seemed to assume new, enormous value. Any and all might be called upon to face heroic situations—might be starved or tortured or imprisoned, might see one's best beloved wounded or killed before one's eyes. The sluggish air seemed charged with this tragic menace.

At all times Paris has an atmosphere peculiarly its own. The light, buoyant

air conveys the impression of being charged with certain psychic forces, as though the millions of men and women who have lived, suffered, dreamed, worked and conquered for all the long centuries of its eventful life were still fluttering, hovering above, inspiring those who continue their work. On this last night of August, the ghosts of those who had fought, had bled, had incited to riot, had struck at kings, had tortured their queen, had fired palaces, or had gone down to heroic death in defense of the great city,—these shapes surely peopled the warm, thick night, starless, moonless, surcharged with suggestive memories.

The city, as a city, appeared to be accepting its fate with the despairing attitude of the already conquered. Those in authority seemed strangely, unaccount-



ably apathetic, inactive. What was happening? Was Paris to be allowed supinely to suffer the fate of Brussels? Was no effort to be made to save her? What was the Governor of Paris doing? He seemed as helpless, confronted by this monstrous calamity, as a new-born babe. Where was Joffre—the saviour of French valour? Had those in power lost all sense of responsibility? Had even the bravest suffered a paralysis of energy, at this appalling imminence of the conquest of Paris? Surely, at the last, a miracle of salvation would come to pass and Paris would be saved.

Thus was the heart of every Parisian alternately rocked by the fluctuations of hope and fear.

Meanwhile, as with the on-sweeping rush of a destructive fate, three German armies were apparently swiftly, irresisti-

bly attempting to envelop the approaches  
to the great French capital.

## CHAPTER X

### *How Paris was Saved*

**T**HE corps of the German army of invasion destined to capture Paris was composed of three principal armies. One, commanded by the Crown Prince, formed the left wing. General von Bülow was in the center and General von Kluck commanded the right wing. This latter army had crossed the whole of Belgium. It had been necessary for it to space (echelon) its posts of supplies. Von Kluck's army had in front of it the English army, commanded by General French, of what remained

of his 80,000 men. Future historians who will describe this campaign will say, without doubt, that the admirable march forward on Paris executed by General von Kluck was only surpassed by the brilliant retreat of General French from Mons.

Faithful to the great principles of German strategy, General von Kluck's constant endeavor was concentrated on his attempt during the whole of his forward march to turn the left wing of the English army. This latter army, commanded by General French, lacked a base. The army of General Percin would have been at this moment, of inestimable succor. But Percin, as we shall presently see, was already on his way to Rouen.

With General von Kluck on his left, pressing him, harassing him, seeking for every point of vantage, the skill which

places General French high among the military strategists consisted in never for one instant allowing his left wing to be turned, an error that would have been fatal to the armies of the Allies. He was thus able to preserve during the whole course of his retreat a position parallel with that of his initial position.

It appears that at the time the German army had advanced as far as Compiègne, some scouts were sent on in advance. Their report to General von Kluck had been satisfactory. The Commander-in-Chief felt assured a forward movement on Paris was safe. General von Kluck had with him an army of x x x x men, all in perfect condition. The attendant fleets of aeroplanes, of Zeppelins and the convoys of big siege guns were ready.

The advance began. The army that had marched through Brussels, that

had fought and conquered Belgium and had entered and taken possession of Compiègne, was made ready for the greatest capture of all—for the taking of the coveted prize of Paris! How loudly beat the heart of every German soldier! How the voices rang up, shouting “Deutschland über Alles!” to the hated French skies. The conquering army’s sweeping, victorious columns were soon to prove to Paris, to France, to all the world, the promised word of the Kaiser—come true. The armies would be in Paris in a day, in a few hours, to teach Paris and Parisians the lesson they had taught Brussels, that they had taught all Belgium—that those who dared defy Germany must suffer as Belgium had suffered. Were Paris to resist, were her forts to belch forth their fire, Paris would be levelled with the dust. In

the heart of many a German soldier the hope leapt high that Paris might be foolhardy enough to make her cannon talk. Such suicidal patriotism would mean but larger booty. The sacking of Paris! The souls of Germans shook with the rapture of covetous greed at that prospect.

The while, the German columns kept marching on. This was one side of the great historic picture.

On the other side of this tragic situation there was Paris.

In Paris itself during this period of protracted anxiety for the safety of the city, the accusation was seriously made against Monsieur Hennion, Prefet de Police, and General Michel, Governor of Paris, of having insisted the government should declare Paris an open city that it might be spared the horrors of bombardment.

Whether or not this accusation can be sustained or denied in the later, fuller knowledge of the situation, it is certain the all-but immediate changes insisted on by General Joffre support the above indictment.\*

On learning the situation in which Paris found itself, General Joffre rose to the great emergency with the resourceful energy of a born military genius. He decided instantly on learning the appalling news of the rapid advance of the German army that Paris should at least attempt a vigorous resistance. The city should not see its glorious escutcheon blackened by the disgrace of facile conquest.

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\* It has been stated, and the report is currently believed that Lord Kitchener came over to Paris at this critical time, and that when in council with General Joffre, certain very drastic measures were threatened in case Paris was undefended. These reports lack official affirmation.



The General made one of the most spirited rushes from the front to Paris, ever known in automobile records. On his arrival, without losing an hour's time, with his quick insight immediately discerning the points of weakness in the grave situation, he obtained a swift change in both the Prefecture and the Governorship of Paris. General Michel was replaced by General Gallieni, the already famous General who had given signal proofs of energetic resources, notably in the governing of Madagascar.

General Joffre's next action was to perform the impossible.

In forty-eight hours he had assembled an army of more than 300,000 men principally composed of men belonging to the regiments stationed in the suburbs of Paris, and to the garrisons of towns in the provinces already invaded. This hastily

united army certainly had no great military value. It was nevertheless this army that, without firing a single shot, saved Paris.

While Paris was being thrilled with the new courage born of the knowledge that the great commander was actually in the city, in command of an army that had risen out of the very earth as it seemed, since no one knew whence it had come; was being uplifted by the buoyant hope that Paris might be saved; since what miracle might not its new governor, the renowned General Gallièni, perform, and with the genius of General Joffre to guide him?—the latter was about to startle Paris by the working of a miracle indeed, and one accomplished by a most seemingly commonplace measure.

With a rapidity of conception which history will preserve as long as history

lasts, General Joffre was to prove he knew how to take advantage, and in the most admirable way, of the fatal blunder committed by the enemy.

Paris on a certain day in early September woke up to the fact that something extraordinary was happening. At the corner of every street policemen stopped automobiles, taxi-cabs and private carriages. The occupants of these vehicles were peremptorily ordered to descend. The drivers in their turn were given directions to rush at full speed to the barracks of the Zouaves. These Zouaves then constituted the flower of the army of defence for Paris. General Joffre was about to attempt one of the most desperate ventures ever essayed by a great strategist.

Meanwhile, General von Kluck on leaving Compiègne the day before had

announced—so authentic rumor runs—that on the following night, he would sleep in Paris. His army, to the last man, was already feeling the heady intoxication of assured capture of the city. Even the dullest, most unimaginative German soldier, as on and on his disciplined, steady tread carried him nearer and nearer to the French capital, was dreaming his dream of what was to happen to him once he trod the macadam of Paris. Above the ringing shouts of the singing thousands, above the pulse-stimulating “Deutschland über Alles” there rang a song more stirring still. There was the quick, immediate promise of hearing one’s musket ring down its steely thump on the resounding Paris streets before the very eyes of those craven Parisians. There would be the famous Parisian shops to loot, perhaps; there would surely be the

great wine cellars, from which to drink one's fill; there would be gold given out in plenty, doubtless, since the French Banks were known to be gorged with money; and above all these, there would be the greatest prize of all—the beautiful French women! Can one wonder the officers in command found difficulty in restraining their men from a too impetuous on-rush? The German officers themselves were pricked by the same exasperating impatience; their imaginations were working on more assured grounds of sensuous gratification.

Their commanding General, however, was experiencing very different emotions. Instructed by his spies that important troops had been assembled within the city to confront him, von Kluck was facing a most difficult situation. If this Parisian army, newly constituted, it ap-

peared, could but succeed in stopping, even for a very few days von Kluck's army, it could, the German General reasoned, at the same time easily be supported by the English army that fifteen days of retreat had, apparently, not disorganized. These two armies could thus easily separate his, von Kluck's army, from the main Germany army. It might even inflict upon him a defeat that would be disastrous.

The arrival, or rather the forward movement of von Bülow had been checked, as General von Kluck well knew, by the necessity laid upon the General to support the Crown Prince; von Bülow's progress had thus been seriously hindered. He could not, therefore, unsupported rush towards the west to the rescue of General von Kluck's army.

General von Kluck was thus forced to change his plan of attack; he found himself obliged to march in an easterly direction in order to insure his juncture with the main German army under von Bülow. There would thus always be time enough, the General argued, to re-begin their united rush on Paris, which, in any case, could be for them only a triumphant movement. Had this plan been carried out, the German armies would have entered Paris from the region in or about Versailles.

Forced thus to deflect his course, General von Kluck suddenly found himself confronted by a most unexpected and most vigorous defensive attack. The very next morning when General von Kluck began afresh his march on Paris, his right wing was hotly greeted by the muskets of the 5,000 Zouaves who during

the night had been enabled to occupy and to entrench themselves in a commanding position.

What was happening?

Had the army that had gone on to Le Mans been able to re-organize itself? Were these unexpected re-inforcements about to menace his rear?

Von Kluck found himself obliged to call a halt.

The very next morning there appeared General Joffre's order of the day, which in its simplicity will remain one of the most beautiful examples of military eloquence in French annals.

“Le temps n'est plus de regarder en arrière. Toutes troupes qui ne pourront plus avancer, devront rester et se faire tuer sur leurs positions.”

“The time has come when there can be no looking backwards. The troops who



find they cannot advance must remain where they are and die where they stand.”

This order of the day will win for General Joffre his seat in the French Academy.

But the gallant French troops were never called upon to obey that glorious challenge to French bravery.

Within less than half a day's march on Paris, General von Kluck found himself forced to confront one of the bitterest moments in a military career. To advance was to court all but certain disaster. Convinced the gallant Zouaves that had met the advancing troops with such murderous fire were supported by the lately assembled French army, General Joffre had seemingly by sheer magic brought into being, von Kluck had but this alternative; he must retreat

or commit the gravest error of which a commanding General could be guilty. An army of defense must be beaten in the field before a great city like Paris could possibly be captured.

In the face of his wondering, murmuring but obedient army, General von Kluck gave his amazing command. The order for a general retreat was given.

And Paris was saved.

The battle of the Marne was the beaten General's desperate attempt to turn the tragedy of failure into the glory of a victory that should again open wide the road to triumphant entry into the French capital.

The military critics who have tried to explain by the above strategic movements the attitude of von Kluck have perhaps been unjust to him. It is all but officially known as an understood

fact that in the German plan the honor of first entering Paris was to be reserved for the Crown Prince. Such a triumph would be a means of heightening the prestige of the Crown Prince in Germany. Perhaps von Kluck hesitated at the critical moment at usurping for himself an honor which had not been intended for him, since he might thus draw upon himself the resentment of the young Prince and of his Imperial father. In any case, to neither one nor the other was there to be ceded the honor of passing beyond the gates of the French capital.

## CHAPTER XI

### *The Story of Lille's Abandonment*

**T**HE tragedy of Lille having been apparently abandoned by her commanding General, left to her fate, and practically handed over to the army of invasion has as yet never been fully explained. Had General Percin remained at his post; had he obeyed the orders received from General Joffre, instead of keeping them unopened in his coat pocket for two long days, the English at Mons, would never have seen the flower of their army mown down; and the battle of Mons itself

might, according to the highest military authorities, possibly have proved the turning of the tide in the Allies favor. Lille would have been saved and Paris would never have been threatened.

But a party of Socialists played the part of fate at this crisis.

On the approach of the Germans toward Lille, certain of the leading radical-socialists of that city went in a body, it appears, to the Prefet of Lille. They suggested to that functionary that were the city of Lille to be declared an open town the enemy would not bombard it. The town would be respected—its art treasures would be saved to the city; its valuable factories would be uninjured. Lille was rich; she could afford to suffer a little from an invading army; far better to pay “through the nose” even than to sacrifice Lille to the

certain destruction wrought by the German big siege guns.

This reasoning appealed to the Prefet. He was quite willing to act on the Committee's suggestion that General Percin and his army of 150,000 men should march out of Lille, leaving the city to the Municipal government,—and to German mercy. The Prefet, however, reminded the timid and practical-minded Lille Radicals that in order to perfect this plan, an order from the Minister of War must be forthcoming, since Monsieur X. had no authority over Percin nor his army.

The Committee of Radical-Socialists "saw" the force of that argument. They acted on it with amazing celerity. The committee went up to Paris. They made their appeal to the then Minister of War who apparently viewed the

case laid before him in the same favorable light as had the Prefet. The Radical Socialists returned to their native city with the signed order from the Minister of War in their pockets.

In the meantime the British army, 80,000 strong, had been bravely confronting overwhelming numbers of the Germans at Mons. This was on August 23rd.

The English were in front of Maubeuge, facing Mons, and had as their mission to retard the advance of the German army while the French army was trying, at Dinant, to cut off by an energetic attack a part of the German army from its base of supplies and to take it between the lines. The English army soon found it could not continue its resistance against 500,000 Germans. Unless reinforcements were speedily brought

to their help, annihilation stared them, grim-eyed, in the face. General Joffre sent post haste his orders to General Percin to hasten to Mons to relieve the then all but decimated English troops.

But General Percin was awaiting the answer the Radical-Socialists were carrying to Lille in their coat pockets. In his own General's pocket Percin kept the Commander-in-Chief's order for two days unopened.

Meanwhile the gallant English army was being slaughtered like sheep brought to the shambles at Mons. A regiment of the Highlanders was reduced in two hours' time from 2,000 to 600.

It was then that the English General, finding himself hopelessly outnumbered, and no reinforcements in sight, began the retreat whose orderly execution has



already won for General French historic distinction.

Meanwhile General Joffre, discovering Percin's inexplicable inactivity, made his own historic journey to Paris. Here he was made acquainted with the facts of the part played by the Radical-Socialists, of the order given by the War Minister to General Percin, and furthermore, of Percin's army having already evacuated Lille marching on towards Rouen. In a few hours, a complete revolution of the Cabinet was accomplished. The over-complacent War Minister, Monsieur Messimy, was turned out and Monsieur Millerand replaced him. Monsieur Delcassé, Monsieur Briand—the two ablest and most brilliant statesmen France possesses—accepted at an instant's notice, and without

an instant's hesitation, the posts they now occupy in the Cabinet.

General Joffre had announced to the heads of the French government his ultimatum; were contradictory orders to be issued from the War Office in moments of crisis, he must resign. Either he was Commander-in-Chief of the French army or he was not. General Percin having received orders from the Minister of War, at a time and moment when it was of the greatest importance his army should be hastening to the rescue of General French—orders to that effect having been forwarded from Headquarters—he had naturally believed it to be his duty to obey the command of the only authority superior to that of the Commander-in-Chief.

Lille, in consequence, was captured. And the battle of Mons, that might

well have proved a turning point in the fortunes of the Allies, was lost.

When the German Uhlans, numbering only 3,000, entered Lille, the officer commanding this force presented himself at the Mairie, speaking perfect French. He was recognized as having been in the employ of one of the most important manufacturies in town. When some of his men went into adjacent private stables to requisition some horses, this former spy, now an accredited German in high command, pointed to certain houses further up the street, assuring his men better mounts would be found in the designated dwellings.

General Percin meanwhile, it is said, had taken pains to dismantle the forts, taking certain of the guns with him. He had left four or five thousand Territorials behind him. When the Uhlans

entered the city, some of these troops were found cooking their evening meal. They were decimated, to the last man.

## CHAPTER XII

### *The Army I Saw at Lisieux*

**O**N my return journey from Paris to my country place near Honfleur, Normandy, chance gave me an insight into a strategic movement, brilliantly planned, of General Joffre's far-reaching outlook in case his defense of Paris should prove unsuccessful.

On descending from the train, the station was swarming with English soldiers. Many were out of the cars; they were gathered in thick groups about the nearest hydrants; laughing, joking, pushing, jostling one another, the "Tommies"

were enjoying their sousing as only Englishmen delight in the use of water.

Once our own cars had rolled on, leaving the track clear, long trains filled with Khaki-clad figures revealed the presence of thousands and thousands of British soldiers. There were regiments of the line, there were artillery regiments, there were cavalry regiments; there were also white-capped, blue-cotton-gowned Army nurses jumping in and out of their own special ambulance cars. Horses could be seen in their boxes nibbling at full bags; saddles were strewn in heaped-up masses; one weary artillery man was stretched at full length on a roll of blankets, his head having for a pillow the seat of a saddle. He was fast asleep, in a slumber so profound the noisy cries, the laughter, and the shouting voices about him were as

unheard as though he were in his own bed in the quiet English village which, doubtless, he had only recently left.

In the Buffet, dozens of officers were quietly breakfasting. The English speech, the low, drawing-room tones, the restrained gestures, the graceful shapes and the clear-cut features made this little French Restaurant assume a strangely foreign aspect. Townspeople were gathered at doorways and windows to look their fill. The comments on the well-turned-out Englishmen, on their alert, yet subdued ways, on their ways also of eating and sitting, even of crossing their legs, clasping a foot, after finishing their meal and the lighting of their cigarettes—the comments of the lookers-on were characteristically French.

“Ah, les gaillards, they know how to make themselves comfortable!”

“See the money fly!” cried a long-nosed Norman, his eyes greedily glistening, as he saw an elderly General bring out a thick roll of French bills.

“How they sit, as easy as though they were in a salon!”

“And their clothes all as tidy as though on parade.”

“So are the men—well dressed. Yet one told me they had been in the trenches for a fortnight.”

“And two days and two nights on the way!” added lustily a lad bursting with the importance of his contribution.

“Well, they are a brave lot. They only complain of one thing—they have no tobacco.”

The words carried an inspiring suggestion. To learn the unaccountable reasons for an English army here, at Lisieux, entrained, going West or South (all the en-



gines were heading apparently towards the coast) was a mystery that must be solved.

The presiding genius at the Buffet obligingly helped me to solve the mystery. With our arms filled to overflowing with cigarettes, my maid and I were soon busily passing bundles of cigarettes to the outstretched soldier hands. I have never experienced, I think, as popular a moment. Cries all along the line rose up, a pleading, laughing chorus. "Here, lady—don't forget a poor lad whose mother will bless you!" "Three cheers for the lady!" "And one for the bonnie lassie!" "And here, lady, not a smoke in a week! God bless you!" The response to our modest action was beginning to be somewhat overwhelming, when an officer, stepping from the near-

est car, touching his cap, suddenly confronted me.

“Let me thank you, also, Madam, for your kindness to my men. I wish I could express my gratitude adequately.”

My ruse had succeeded. I must make quick use of the opportunity, for already orders to entrain were being rushed along the line.

I had but one question to ask. I delivered my blow.

“You can. Why, can you tell me, are you heading South, or West, turning your backs on Paris, when the Germans are at Compiègne?”

Even the perfect armor of complete self-mastery every English gentlemen wears as part of his training and ancestral inheritance may occasionally be pierced. The blue eyes that were staring at me opened wide as I hurled my question;

and a faint flush rose on the dark, tanned cheek.

There was moment's hesitation: there was a perceptible recoil; and then the gentleman had himself completely in hand. Again he touched his cap. His smile was still kindly, but the tone was edged with a distinct note of irony.

"Ah, Madam! You are asking for what I cannot, alas! give you—for a military secret."

"I know I am. But, unless you will at least give me a hint of the truth, how do you know what I may do?"

The hearty English laughter assured me my volley had hit its mark.

I then confided the fact that I was to sail for America on the morrow; that I was going on a small, slow ship, and therefore could be trusted to keep any secret for at least ten days; also having lived in

France for fifteen years, and having been identified with Normandy for over a quarter of a century, I was as safe a guardian of a secret as even a man or a Frenchman could be.

“Can you really keep a secret?” The blue eyes laughed again into mine their doubting smile. The officer wouldn’t have been a man had he not also lightly mocked at me with his amused, incredulous tone.

I finally convinced him of my trustworthiness. The pact made was that I should divulge no hint either of having seen the entrainment, or of the destination of the troops, until after landing at New York, and not even then were the Germans to force their way through Paris.

I was thereupon told the reasons for this movement of an army south. Five hun-

dred thousand men, English and French were to concentrate at Le Mans, there to block the way—in case of an advance along the coast—or a dash of the German fleet for the harbors of Cherbourg or Brest. That was all I was to learn from the officer. For the order “Board the train!” “On board!” were being given. My kind friend of ten minute’s intimacy—for is not confidence the supreme test of true friendship?—after shaking my hand had leapt to his post. The parting words I heard, as he leant his tall, graceful shape through the car window, I hear still:

“If you keep this to yourself, for ten days, I’ll begin to believe in a woman’s word—again!”

If this charming officer should ever see this page, he will know he can renew his faith. Five months have elapsed since his

confession of lost illusions and the musical, vocal note that rose above the ruder cries of "Cheers for the Ladies;" since the waving of caps, the puffing of volumes of smoke from the densely packed groups of happy-faced Tommies who crowded about doorways to wave hands and caps, and to shout "Good bye! Meet us again at the next station, Lady, Good bye!"

## CHAPTER XIII

### *The German Fort Near Caen*

**T**HE command of the Le Mans Railroad junction was not the only strategic point involved in sending an army to guard the doors of Upper Normandy, of Cherbourg, and of Brest.

There was more at stake. Some few years ago—three, as far as my memory serves me—on my frequent automobile rides to Caen, I became interested in watching the building of what looked like foundries going on a few miles outside of this former capital.

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A large tract of land, several wide acres in extent, had been razed bare of trees, farms, hedges and even of fertile fields and grassland. The future plan of construction obviously involved an extensive outlay of both capital and labor. Little by little, signs of the character of the enterprise became more and more evident. Workmen's houses lined the French military road that joins Pont L'Evêque to Caen. These houses were no mere temporary, make-shift habitations; they were of solid masonry, stone-faced. These dwellings commanded the approach of the road leading to Caen.

Gradually, huge buildings, tall chimneys and wide areas of solidly-laid concrete disfigured the lovely Normandy landscape. Far as the eye could see, dummy engines running on improvised



rails and cars filled with earth that had a tawny tint, traversed the now stricken land. This colored dirt was a valuable mineral ore.

On the west side of the military road uprose during the summer of 1913 a towering earthwork—a sort of miniature hillock. On top of this artificially-made prominence, there soon appeared a huge, roomy dwelling, the latter capped by a turret-like tower. The architecture of this house, as was that of the workmen's houses and of the various other minor buildings was sufficiently striking in character to provoke amazed comment. No Frenchman, it seemed, could possibly have designed lines and proportions that thus outraged every canon of taste.

Inquiries as to what the house on its strangely planned elevation might be were not readily answered. Workmen

passed one by shrugging indifferent shoulders. The bosses, "les patrons," turned their backs and quickly made for distant objective points when questioned. It was only at the end of a year—last summer, 1914, in July—that I was able to elicit the following curt answer to my questioning:

"The house up there—là haut?—it is the Superintendent's house."

"But why build a hill, along a roadside and on a plain?"

The man assumed a dogged, sullen look, "Sais pas"—and walked on.

In the city of Caen itself no one seemed to be able to give more definite information.

Bare, hideous, as was now this part of the land thus desecrated for commercial necessities, unsightly as were the huge, towering chimneys and the

curiously-built, turret-like furnaces, over this whole tract of land there stretched a strange veil of mystery. Something sinister, a something uncanny hung about the place, as though some hidden menace or danger lurked in the very shadows cast by the uprising buildings. Those engaged in the vast works added to this sense of nameless semi-terror. The empty road, on the approach of an automobile, was in itself confession that a secret was to be guarded.

On October 20, 1914, you might have read in any of the French papers, that "At the Council of the Ministers held this morning under the presidency of M. Poincaré the Minister of Public Works has communicated the results of an inquest he had ordered made into the nature and character of the Normandy mines. The Dielette mine,

owned by M. Thyssen, must be sequestered, according to the decree of 27 Septembre, *and because of its proximity to the forts of Brest.*

“The Lechatelier-Thyssen Company, owners of the Caen Foundries, had contracted with the Thyssen Firm to furnish them with mineral ore and coal. These contracts are null and void under the same decree.”

Such was the official announcement of this interesting German plan for an easy capture of Caen and Cherbourg. For German the two firms were, and it was Krupps, it is unofficially stated, but affirmed under excellent authority, who were the owners of the two properties, the real ownership being disguised under the name of their agents, Lechatelier-Thyssen—the latter a celebrated German capitalist.

The earthwork, on investigation by the French authorities, was found to be a miniature fort provided with loopholes. This fort, together with the workmen's houses, solidly built, commanded the approach along the military road. The Superintendent's house, high-perched, with its hideous but business-looking tower, overlooked the Caen plains for miles. Within the house were maps—maps whereon were designated every road, lane, field, house and farm. Every known instrument for use, in sighting either distance or guns, was found in abundance. The solid concrete foundations behind the embankment thus partly screened from view, would furnish the necessary base for the German siege guns.

The plan was thus laid bare for an easy capture of Normandy. Had Paris

fallen, the conquering German army would have marched on through Normandy, laying waste this garden of Northern France. Mantes, Evreux, Lisieux, Pont l'Evêque—each jewel of Calvados in turn would have been despoiled of its architectural treasures. And Caen—grey-faced, spire-crowned Caen, whose streets have the wandering grace of a flowing stream, whose Norman, Gothic and Renaissance sculptures and architectural masterpieces, whose Cathedrals and private hotels are set—as Bellini framed his Madonnas, in an arabesque of blossoms and flowers—Caen would doubtless have shared the same tragic fate as Rheims.

Was there not, indeed, need of an army at Le Mans?

## CHAPTER XIV

### *Modern Frenchmen*

**G**ENERAL JOFFRE will stand out among the heroic figures of this stupendous struggle as Plutarch's men have stood to the world for two thousand years of hero worship. In the make-up of this remarkable man there are the antique Roman virtues of the noblest courage and the loftiest patriotism allied to an American resourcefulness and power of initiative. There is a sub-base in his nature that seems to draw its inherited strength rather from Anglo-Saxon sources than from the more emotionable French strain. He has been com-

pared to General Grant; in both, the exercise of quiet power has been part of the secret of their success. General Joffre has the ruminating trait so characteristic of the American General, also highly developed. Slow to form conclusions, he shows powerful energy as a resolute, dogged fighter.

In General Joffre's talent of restraint, in his capacity for holding back until the moment to strike comes; in his superb calm and rare knowledge of his own men—of their capacities, talents, possibilities of heroism, and how to withhold their inflammable impulse to court death rather than not to meet the enemy more than half-way—he has shown himself a master of strategy, as well as possessing the military genius with which every great General must be endowed—or he fails as the ideal leader of his armies.



“Le père Joffre,” as his soldiers lovingly call him, is implicitly trusted by his vast army, by the War Office, and throughout France. No higher praise can be awarded even to a Napoleon.

Born in a small town in the Pyrennies—Rivesaltes, near Perpignan, a town on one of those stony rivers wittingly described by Alphonse Karr as “a river in which the washerwomen dry their clothes,” there was neither illustrious parentage nor disturbing environment to hinder the development of those qualities of simplicity, modesty and naturalness that, like certain shy flowers, bloom best in the shade.

The distinguishing feature of General Joffre’s bearing and attitude is simplicity. That trait alone might seem to mark him as one destined to play a great rôle, since the greater the man, the less of pose will

there be in his composition. General Joffre's choice in dressing proclaims his indifference to appearances. On his General's uniform the only insignia of his rank to be seen are the three little embroidered stars on the collar and sleeves. Not a single decoration, not a cross enlivens the dull black coat. "Big, a little heavy, but supple, well set up, firmly planted on his straight legs, the General gives one an impression of force—not the brutal, aggressive force of a Bismarck, but rather the strength of the bull, powerful, patient, good, the artisan of fruitful harvests," says one of the French General's admirers.

In the eyes there is set a bit "of the light blue sky of France," the writer adds—"the whole face illuminated by this tender gaze—a look which surprises and charms."

The genius of this great man presents rare qualities in perfect equilibrium. There is no discord, no seeming complexity in the make-up of this unusual character. The countenance reveals the man healthy, happy. "Neither illness nor ambition, nor the passions nor sorrow have left their imprint on this composed, resolute face."

Another French writer has said of him that his is a "nature moyenne agrandie." No one of the traits in the French General's character, taken separately, would surprise or prove greatness. In their ensemble, the capacity for long, laborious work, the power of reflection, the high sense of justice, the rare professional conscience that can be both severe and yet appreciative, and above all, the possession of infinite patience—it is in the union of all these qualities in perfect balance that

we find the secret of the great general's strength.

For years General Joffre has foreseen the coming of the present war in Europe. Again and again he has lifted a prophetic voice.

“To be ready to-day all the resources of the country, all the intelligence of the people, all their moral energy, must have been directed with method, with tenacity, towards a single end—towards victory. Everything must have been organized, foreseen. Once hostilities are declared, no improvisation will avail. What is then lacking will always be lacking. The least mishap might cause a disaster.”

And again:

“Each and all must help in the preparation for the national defense. No single, individual action must be lost. The goodwill of all is necessary. . . .

This preparation is dependent for results on all effort, general or particular, positive or negative, intelligent or mistaken, past or present, in all the branches of national activity. Such preparation is allied to national life, and can be developed in perfect harmony with the activity, the prosperity and the civilization of the country."

While conscious, "intelligent" preparation for such a war as we now see France is waging against Germany may not have been an organized national movement, the steady advance, the silent forces in the upbuilding of French character have produced results that have won praise even from her enemies.

Many of the traits revealed by the great circumstance of war in General Joffre's character may be said to be essentially modern French traits. The

character of the whole French nation has been going through a most interesting process of evolution during the past forty odd years. This development has been particularly noticeable within the last ten years.

Had Germany wished for an easy victory, she should not have waited forty years to attack France. In those four decades the whole French nation has been given a chance for growth, for the development of some of its best and noblest energies. The democratic form of government has spread throughout the whole nation, the light of an illuminated hope; for the first time in its history, France has had the consciousness of being freed from the oppressive tyranny of monarchical and priestly despotism. Ten years have passed since it has shaken off the last fetters that bound it

to blind obedience. The separation of Church and State released France from the last link that rivetted her to feudal survivals of autocratic authority.

Under these novel conditions a new man has grown up in France. The slow, formative process that has been going on during the days since Sedan has developed individualism. A new France has been forged. Every man in France now stands on his own feet. When he shoulders his gun, when he makes his superb dashes at the enemy's front, he knows why and for whom he is fighting. He is fighting for himself, and not for a king; he is defending his own wife and children, and not a king's mistress; he is crying above the roar of bullets, "Vive la France!" because, at last, France is his very own.

The various processes that have built up this new type of Frenchmen are, a Republican form of government; the spread of socialism; and the separation of Church and State. To these formative conditions must be added the tremendous influences attributable to compulsory education in the schools, and the elective education of the press.

The educative power and influence of the press throughout France has been one of the strongest bulwarks of the present Republican form of government. Every Frenchman, however poor, reads his paper. It is greatly to the credit of such popular newspapers as *Le Petit Journal*, *Le Petit Parisien* and others, costing a sou—thus within the means of the very poorest—that this daily education of French boys and men has on the whole been so wholesome. The



newspapers have been builders up of a world-wide knowledge, as well as the planters of the seed of patriotic ardor. Socialists, Anarchists have their own more revolutionary press—as is well known. But such is the power for good of even this revolutionary press in France in a crisis; such is the inherited instinct for order, for organized solidarity, that at a “*mot d’order*”—at a word of command—those masses that seem but to wait for the waving of the torch of insurrection to fire to atoms the whole fabric of the social order, can as easily be lead to defend it. The Socialists’ unanimous gathering to the support of the Republican appeal to arms, on reading Jaurès’ last article to his followers, was triumphant proof of the power of the press to awaken instantaneous response.

In Germany the press is muzzled. There are all the processes employed by which tyrannical dictators have reduced a State to abject authority. The "Welt-fonds" controls the press. The German press is a government organ; it gives the news of the world as it wishes it might be; it reproduces government acts magnified to splendid achievement. The contrast between the English, French and American accounts of the battles, in the present war, and the German "communiqués" sufficiently proves the muzzling process employed in the so-called "Reptile Press." Even this controlled Press is not available to all classes of Germans. To secure daily delivery of one's newspaper, a German citizen must subscribe to his paper. If he wishes to buy a sheet, he must seek one at the cafés. How many

of the "men in the street" can enter a well lighted café in shabby clothes with only the few "phennigs" in his pocket with which to buy his newspaper? One easily understands the meaning of the oft-repeated remarks of the common German soldier taken prisoner: "We did not know what the war was about."

The mistaken policy of all tyrannical forms of government is the same—to use the lie according to the Jesuit formula—that the end justifies the means. This system was possible under older monarchical conditions. In our modern world the lie is a weak screen and a broken weed. The cable, the telegraph and the war correspondent, the latter the contemporaneous historian—writing history as fast as it is being made—all these modern agencies make truth the best,

as well as the surest victorious policy.

The progressive transformation of the national character in France has been especially noticeable in the peasant and working classes, and in the lower and middle bourgeoisie,—in that world of Frenchmen which makes up the more vital, vigorous part of the nation.

Each and every one of these factors has been a contributory force in the development of these modern Frenchmen. In the laboring class especially, the new ideals have permeated the whole body of workers,—ideals that have taken, it is true, a more or less socialistic, revolutionary form. Socialism has taught the man who toils his power, and the power that comes from organization. But all Frenchmen are not socialists. The best citizens among French work-

ingmen are too intelligent to be led blindfolded into pitfalls painstakingly prepared by that leisure class among socialists—the leaders—who toil a little so as not to spin, but whose toil is of the easy-chair order.

What socialistic doctrines were worth, as far as the non-combative principle goes, has been proved by the on-rush of the whole body of believers, both in France and Germany, to join in a war of defence in France, and in one of the most stupendous wars for pure conquest and lust of power in Germany.

Modern ideals and aspirations are moulding throughout the world the whole social fabric. A democratic form of government and the spread of the doctrine of individualism have given a new bent, new aims, a wholly novel outlook, to French minds and character.

The modern Frenchman is imbued with the consciousness of belonging to himself—of being a free man. For the first time in his long, historic experience, he realizes he stands on his own feet; he neither wears the shackles of the mediaeval vassal, nor is he dependent on court nor king. He is a voter. Below all the effervescence of the national love of parading its woes; below all the disturbing currents of political animosities, the slow, steady process of the evolution of individualism has given birth to the modern Frenchman. Some of these newer conceptions of life are not, perhaps, as poetic, nor are they as picturesque, if looked at from an aesthetic point of view, as were some of the lost dreams that have made the figures of heroes, of martyrs, and of saints who crowd the pages of French history as

thick as do the thousands of statues that people her still unmutilated Cathedrals. Yet it is in this, the Frenchman's progress in measuring the values that count in life, in a higher conception of duty, of responsibility, and in purer ideals among the people, that some of the more famous among modern French writers have found their material,—Rènè Bazin in "Le Ble qui Lève," Barrès in his numerous novels, and Brioux in his strong problems plays, such as "Les Remplacantes," "La Robe Rouge," "Les Avariés," etc.

To the immense and beneficent influences of its purer literature, and particularly to the press throughout France, one must add compulsory education as one of the chief factors in developing French mind and character. The stride in the progress made throughout all

classes in France has been prodigious since the separation of church and state. The powerful, repressive influence of the clergy on liberal education was then removed. New ways and methods immediately came into vogue; oral lectures as opposed to routine recitations became popular. Children instead of being kept in school for long hours, were brought by mothers or governesses to classes for certain lessons only, to which they arrived fresh, eager for competitive recitation.

The novelty of hearing serious and learned Professors of the Sorbonne, of the Institut, men of science, historians, renowned actors and literati lecturing to vast audiences at the theatres, at lecture halls, such as Le Foyet and L'Hotel des Annales, to young and old,—such lectures delightfully diversified



by actors, actresses and danseuses, to illustrate historical episodes or the works of poets and even novelists, have done more to develop the mind of the growing generation than has ever been accomplished before in France.

These novel processes have stimulated the naturally quick French mind, increased its powers of reasoning, and enlarged the range of criticism and observation.

There has thus been an extraordinary rebound noticeable, throughout France, once the pent-up energies of its people were released from certain old-world traditions and tyrannies. French character has proved also its indestructible quality. The forces that had made it great under so many kingships, that had survived so many disastrous reverses, revolutions and foreign invasions, which

only recently have re-acted from the dispiriting effects of Fashoda, from the scandals of the Dreyfus, the Humbert and the Caillaux trials, were forces as potential as ever.

“Le grand secret de durée qui fut la France,” is her secret still.

## CHAPTER XV

### *Some Racial Traits*

**I**T is no part of the design of this short book to enlarge on the long stretch of historical development of the two thousand years of historic life during which France has been working out its destiny. Yet, rightly to understand the structure of modern French character, to enable one even to guess at the origin of some of those finer qualities which, like the fire that lies hidden in embers, suddenly flash forth to amaze and delight an admiring world, at least a superficial survey of some of the forces

that have forged the contrasting traits that puzzle foreigners must be made known.

How little the foreigner realizes that, in meeting one Frenchman, he is not meeting *all* Frenchmen. The best known type is, admittedly, the Parisian, whether he be nobleman or shopkeeper, petit rentier or workman. Yet, below the Parisian veneer of acquired grace and good manner, of glib wit, of flippant cynicism, let a crisis come, and the veneer cracks: one suddenly confronts a new man. The Gascon becomes garrulous; the Burgundian truculent; the Breton mulish or recklessly brave; the Provençale fiery and tempestuous; the Norman silent—yet ready armed for any adventure; and the man of the north, stubborn, aggressive, capable of Flemish endurance.

French literature has reflected these various hereditary strains and characteristics. Who could mistake Guy de Maupassant's Normans for Daudet's "Tartarin de Tarascon?" Flaubert's "Madame de Bovary" would have found no prototype in priest-ridden, Catholic Brittany. Bazin would never have sought in the Midi his heroines. And Antole France's "Le Lys Rouge,"—that delicate Parisian passion-flower—could only have bloomed in the hot-house warmth of Parisian salons.

The various ethnological strains that give to each province in France its racial, distinctive note, help to solidify the nation. Variety, like competition, works for intensive effort. When a nation is composed of many diverse elements, it is like a mother that has given birth to strong men. If men are strong, they

will not all be of the same family likeness, but they will each and all speak the same tongue; at their mother's knee they have all learnt the same prayers; and when they separate, their eyes turn homewards to the central home fires,—to the source from which they drew their breath.

France has had, in turn, to amalgamate the Celt, the Gaul, the Frank, the Roman and the Norman. The five hundred years of Roman civilization superimposed a second base on the earlier Gallic foundation. Rome was to unify Gaul, giving her a common language, a common law, a commercial system, a unified coinage, as well as the peace and security and the wonderful organizing system the Empire brought to all her conquered countries. The best postal system in the Europe of

Caesar's day was the one established by the Conqueror, to keep him in constant contact with Rome. The superb Roman roads, still traceable in our days, built by conquered Gauls, taught Romanized Gaul the inestimable advantage of highways over rivers—the earlier, more facile means of communication. The Roman cities and their splendor and luxury were models to be copied and improved upon, by the race of born artists who, after centuries of a worship of mysterious Druidical deities and, later, of Greco-Roman gods, could turn temples erected in honor of Venus and Apollo into the early Christian churches.

The base on which rests French character is thus proved to be composed of innumerable racial elements. The varied contradictions we see in that character can only be explained and

understood by even a cursory knowledge of the racial inheritances bequeathed to it. Who would imagine that an invasion of German Franks gave their name to France as early as the second half of the fifth century B.C.? This race, though of Celtic origin, closely resembled the German type; it was blue-eyed, tall and fair. The shorter-statured, dark-eyed natives the Iberians and Ligurians found in possession of the soil, the Franks subdued, but did not wholly supplant. The main body of these conquering Franks super-imposed their habits and customs on the natives. Later, it was these two races, the Gauls and Franks, as well as the Iberians and Ligurians, Rome had to fight, when Caesar came.

The prolonged survival of some of these ancient races which, each in turn,



conquered portions of the then vast region known as Galli, is proved in the names of Gascons adopted by the Aquitani,—Gascon giving birth to Basques, the latter a term applied to the Aquitani who, in the lower Pyrenees, have preserved almost unchanged, a race and language untainted by Roman influences.

The base of French life and character already rested on a secure foundation when Rome came to give her five hundred years of Roman civilization.

When Caesar, lying in his silken, curtained litter, scanned between the open slits the country he was to seal with the stamp of Roman conquest, his eyes must have opened wide—Roman eyes though they were. Let us lift a corner of the curtain that veiled the brilliant summer sun for Caesar's

curious, critical gaze, as he looked out on the France of his day—not yet France. The Gaul he saw and conquered was one vast forest, with occasional clearings. In these clearings were embryonic towns, called oppida. One remembers Cicero's contemptuous fling "Is anything more hideous than a Gallic *oppidum*?" Yet in those despised, primitive towns we find rather a surprising degree of comfort and luxury, as well as a rude protective strength against outside foes.

Certain survivals in French family life have been handed down from the dwellers of those *aedificia*. Those isolated dwellings were usually situated beside a stream, close to the open forest. The Frenchman's love of the open air, his passion for dining, for sipping his demitasse under the open sky, was thus one of his earliest inheritances.

The state of this earlier Gallic society was patriarchal. One realizes how strong is the survival of this system in the solidarity of family life in the France of our day. Those who do not know France flippantly assert her indifference to the family tie. Those of us who have lived among French men and women realize that the common reproach of there being no family life in France should rather be directed to the fact that, in many cases, there is nothing else. Each family in France is a little tribe unto itself. This close knitting of the family tie accounts for much of the narrow, insular, provincial point of view.

The dot system had been handed down from those early Gallic days. Already women had attained to a dignified place in that ancient family life.

She was not bought—she brought with her her dot. She could even then be considered, in a certain sense, a proprietress, since her husband must give, as an equivalent for her dot, his share of his fortune in flocks. In virtue of such a marriage contract, women exercised an indirect influence in the family or, by virtue of her rank or possessions, became a political factor.

The modern French passion for dress, and a taste for combining contrasting colors was already prevalent, even in Caesar's day. The bright tints in women's dress recently brought into fashion by the Balkan wars give us a hint of the rich *carracalla*—a sort of blouse; of the striped embroidered *sagum*, or mantles, sometimes worn with a huge buckle, dropping from the shoulder. The scarlets, purples, delicate pinks and mustard

yellows of these garments were further enriched by gold and metallic ornaments. From arms and necks—necks browned in the sun, the round, thick necks of a young, vigorous race—as from fingers, flashed the soft gleam, the darting fires of priceless jewels.

As though conscious of how taking would be the record, as a last decorative adjunct to this somewhat barbaric but intensely picturesque apparel, the Gauls preceded the French coiffeur and his more than willing customers, in a preference for blond hair. It was the Gallic fashion to wash one's hair in—chalk! It appears a blond tint can be produced, indefinitely, by the constant use of this element, if properly mixed with water. I should not, however, advise any over-zealous imitators of early Gallic tastes to follow the recipe. This care-

fully cultivated, tinted hair was worn long,—hair that, when fighting, streamed in the wind like a horse's mane.

Before Rome came to give her richer base of a refined and elaborate civilization to the nation that was later to perpetuate it—the torch handed from one Latin hand to the hand that raises it aloft to-day—already Gaul was known for its artistic productions. Industrial arts had, indeed, made the name of Gallic taste and skill attain to such a degree of perfection as to make their ceramics, their working of gold, silver, copper and even iron, renowned. The great Gallic specialty, however, was their admirable art of enameling. These clever Gauls had also brought to such a degree of finish their knowledge of tinning they were enabled to make their copper vessels shine, as though wrought of

pure silver. These products were sought for, even before the Roman conquest, by every Roman amateur of taste.

In our day, the soldier has the instinct to copy birds or insects thus attempting to reproduce the colors of nature the better to utilize nature as a protective element. But the Gauls went to battle either stark—or in Oriental magnificence; their art must be the servant of their military splendor. When the war chariots, massed in solid ranks, flew towards the Roman foe, the silver wheels of the cars gleaming under the strong noon sun so blinded the eyes of the enemy as to make them blink. These silver wheels, it is recorded, were beautifully chiseled, as were the jewels of the period, and the jewelled ornaments of the soldiers.

If Rome brought along with its amphitheatres that delight in spectacular representation which has never died out, in France, making the French Theatre today the most vital and fructifying dramatic element in the modern world, the secrets Rome stole from Athens' learning, philosophy and art, she whispered, and then trumpeted, into France's eager ear. Once the Wingèd Victory had crossed the Alps bearing on her wings the golden-dusted pollen of Greek art and literature, she found a soil congenial to the continuation and perpetuation of her treasured knowledge.

Five centuries after Caesar's genius had begun the transformation of warring tribes into the nucleus of a nation, the Normans were to sail up the Seine to have their rude eyes dazzled by the gleam of Paris,—that seemed to them



as though set in a coronal of gold. To the France of that day, these Northmen were to bring, in their turn, a sturdier spirit of high adventure, their solid qualities of frugality, of industry, and their passion for conquest. They were to give to England a Norman king, as they also carried Norman valour as far south as the walls of Sicily, there to set in the gleaming mosaics of its cathedrals, the saints and martyrs of the hierarchy of Heaven.

The later, shaping influences of the Crusades—that tidal wave of wider knowledge and wider being brought about by extensive travel to foreign lands no Frenchman of the Middle Ages would have dreamed of undertaking, unless under the impulse of passionate religious conviction;—and later the elevating, refining effects of chivalry, all these

influences prepared the nation for its great awakening to Renaissance enlightenment.

The Bourbons brought the stultifying principle of the divine right of kings to a climax. The whole history of France since the reign of Louis XV has been the struggle of the people to crush that doctrine. If she lost some of her power in Europe at the close of the eighteenth century, owing to the disastrous effects of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War, out of her defeats she was to wrench the golden secret of a new force—of a new ennobling principle. Her philosophers, in the latter years of this eighteenth century of an eclipse of power, were to dream a new, a wonderful dream, one France and America were the first to prove might be turned into reality. The Encyclo-

pedists and Voltaire and Rousseau were to preach the astounding creed that a people might rise against a king, that priests might find their power a broken weed, and that a return to nature was the salvation of those who had lived in the hot-house tyranny of courts.

The French Revolution that was to inflame all Europe in a general conflagration produced a constructive genius.

Napoleon rose out of the flames of the Revolution, to re-establish order, to introduce a renewed security, and to dream his dream of an old-world conquest of Europe. Since his fall, France has been living under successive governments, apparently suffering from periodical attacks of political instability.

In point of fact, her real unity as a nation dates from before and after Napoleon's reign. France has been

steadily growing to mature knowledge of herself and her own needs and wants since 1793. Her development in self-consciousness began with the firing of the Bastille. She knew then, as she knows now, exactly what she wanted. The opening of those prison doors was significant, terrifying to kingship and to priest-craft dominion. The soul of France was born at last, and that soul proposed to be freed from all forms of oppression, tyranny, and unlawful rule. You may read the histories of the successive reigns, revolutions, and political upheavals that have convulsed France since Napoleon went to end his days on that sun-scorched island in the seas to the present day, when Socialists and Radicals have been fighting to protect their own soil and their wives and children against Prussian military de-

spotism, and the history of France is just that—the determination of the whole French nation to be freed from any form of oppression.

In spite of the battle waged between Combists and the clergy, between those in favor of compulsory non-religious education, and the Catholic's clamoring for at least a recognition of Deity in the common schools, France as a nation has gained immeasurably from the separation of her church and state. In the end the clergy will find their own status, among all classes of Frenchmen, will also have been greatly improved. The present war will inaugurate a new area; it has, indeed, already seen the miracle accomplished of a universal revival of genuine religious feeling throughout France. The Catholic religion, of all religions in the world, is the one peculiarly suited

to French character. Its pomp and splendor appeal to the Frenchman's delight in beauty—to the sensuous side of his nature, as its wonderful organization delights his sense of orderliness. Authority, divested of despotic power, is a force, also, every Frenchman respects—he who for thousands of years has lived under authority.

The cry of indignation that rang up throughout the ranks of believing Catholics when the law was passed compelling priests to serve their term in the Army, should now be turned into a paean. The courage, the bravery displayed by the clergy serving in the ranks, their members fronting death in the trenches or as ambulance nurses along the fire zone, administering the Sacrament to dying comrades one moment, to shoulder the rifle the next,—such proofs of mag-

nificent heroism will accomplish results which the Socialists, in their shortsighted fanaticism, never dreamt could come to pass. The fighting priest will reconquer his lost prestige. He is the brother-in-arms who lifts the sacrament above his musket. He is the visible embodiment of that church in which every fighting Frenchman had made his First Communion, in which he has knelt in prayer by his mother's side as a lad, in which he was married, and through whose ministrations, if he lives to return to the home parish, he will be buried. He may have turned scoffer; may have accepted the modern creeds of ill-digested, semi-atheistic ideas; when confronting death, he turns as instinctively to the priest beside him, comrade and friend now, one sharing the same agony of immobility in the same narrow spaces,

the same horrors of life in the trenches, the same appalling possibility of capture, mutilation, or quick death,—to this formerly, perhaps, hated priest the most violent anti-clerical will turn, as a child seeks its mother's arms.

The Socialists never knew in truth what weapons they were forging for future use among the clergy when they made the priests into soldiers. After working, suffering, starving, shivering, fighting and agonizing side by side, there will emerge a new solidarity, a better understanding, a more intimate brotherhood, between all ranks of both clergy and the men in the army.



## CHAPTER XVI

### *The Contrast in Ideals*

**A**MONG the surprises the present war waging in Europe has given to the world, not the least in importance is the revelation of these various unsuspected forces latent in French character. That France could meet a crisis with courage and dignity, not even those nations who denied her possessing an ideal of moral conduct could doubt. Her varied gifts, her taste—that dictates in matters of art and dress; her literary superiority in point of style; and her many brilliant

contributions to science and medicine,—all these have been generously conceded. Her homelier virtues of thrift, her prodigious industry, her temperance in living, have been frequently presented as models for those whose less disciplined natures made them rather critics than creators of national prosperity.

The world, however, as a world, has not been as seriously interested in French virtue as in her supposed deflection from the straight path. Paris, that stands for all France—to most foreigners—has been judged as Voltaire judged Paris—Cashmere; the character of its inhabitants has been summed up as being gracious, amiable, light-hearted, as seriously occupied with bagatelles as other people are with important affairs. Above all else, the whole French nation has been indicted for pursuing pleasure to

the fatal point of precipitating the moment of its national decadence. For a decade or more not only her sister nations and the Americas, but France itself, have been loudly proclaiming France's obvious and inevitable degeneration.

In the fortnight preceding the outbreak of the war France did, indeed, appear to present to the eyes of the world the spectacle of a nation tearing at its own vitals. With a frankness unmatched by that of any other people, Frenchmen expose their very worst side in moments of political crisis. They let the whole world into the secret of their family quarrels; they not only indecently expose the household linen to public view, but seemingly delight in dilating on the rents and tears, even to the point of drawing public attention to the in-

ferior quality of the article. No people in the world indulge in self-abuse as do the French. Exposure of national mistakes, peculiarities, absurdities, or contradictions presented by the national character, stimulate the analytical faculty; and the Frenchman is yet to be born who would not sacrifice the patriot to the critic—in words. In moments of action the critic dies of inanition; the hero rises from his ashes.

This passion for caustic self-criticism is one of the many reasons for the all but universal misjudgment meted out to the Frenchman. The world is not yet sufficiently old not to believe what it hears. When, therefore, France, through its press, its theatre, its literature and its Montmartre exhibitions, proclaims the degree of corruption and the period of decadence in morals it has

attained, all the world comes to the funeral.

What centuries of religious development of conduct can produce, the Musselman proves to us: "Our ideal is to die in battle" was the outburst of a Radjut recently landed at Marseilles. "If only the war is not over," he added, with a hopeful smile. A Japanese does not see the Moslem's immediate reward of houris awaiting him at the gate of Paradise; he, being of the cult of Shinto, considers the supreme bliss to be able to sacrifice his life for his Mikado.

The German soldier is neither a Moslem nor a believer in Shintoism. He has not had the advantage of long centuries of training. Yet, under the new system of German methods for the making over of citizens into soldiers since 1870, the systematic, educational

development of Germany from a peace-loving, sober, home-abiding people, into a nation intoxicated with the heady wine of "weltpolitik" has startled Europe, America,—the whole world into amazed surprise. It is, perhaps, rather Germany who should be amazed at the world's blindness,—at the dense stupidity of other nations. For has it not been a proof of extraordinary dullness, of defective vision in others, not to be able to see the very plain writing on the wall Germany has been openly spelling out for all the world to read? For forty-four years Germany's policy, national, international, colonial, educational, military, has had but one definite aim,—to weld her huge Empire into one magnificent machine. As has been well said, "We see that Germany . . . . is the most triumphant example of

science and brains applied to state building.”

The system has been tried before. It was effectively introduced on a smaller scale in Sparta. All male Sparta was in the army. We know the results of that war-like spirit on the destinies of Greece. After Athens lost her fleet in Syracusan waters, the military nations of Sparta first, and then Macedonia, conquered Athens. These invasions prepared the way for the Roman conquest.

A military nation has no use for, nor can she really understand, the moral effects of ideals of conduct. Yet Sparta produced no Kaiser—passionless, relentless, more cruel than Nero, since he has had the developments in humanitarianism of two thousand years of accumulated teaching in the lessons of mercy; nor did Greece hand down to us the

brutal philosophies of a Neitzsche or a Treitschke. We had to wait these two thousand years for a Teutonic civilization, supposed to be founded on a Christian basis, to produce three such cold-blooded disciplinarians.

Germany has already been indicted at the bar of the world as she will be hereafter decried by future historians, not only for the crimes she has committed in defiance of the laws of humanity and the rules that govern modern warfare, but for her imperfect civilization.

The supreme test of the civilization of a people is the degree of refinement it has reached in manners, in its power of self-control, in its treatment of women, in its methods of warfare, and in its sense of justice. Judged by the above standards Germany presents herself as inferior to almost every nation with any pretensions



to culture. Her manners have long been noticeably coarse, have even grown more and more offensive since her development as a military power; her treatment of women in her own realm is mediaeval, since the subordination of woman is necessary to state needs and state requirements; the German deficiency in self-control was proven in the lustful orgie of Louvain, in their barbarous, primitive gloating in sheer senseless brutality and in the rapture of killing for the sake of killing. Violence, barbarity and cruelty can never be considered as proofs of culture. Germany's deficiencies help us as have no other models, to define exactly what we understand by civilization. We know and feel France to be almost completely civilized, without the necessity imposed upon us to define the character of her civilization. We had vaguely

imagined Germany, were the test applied, would stand among the other leading civilized European states. Her intellectual achievements, her scientific attainments, her love of art, her musical supremacy, and her prodigious talent for organization as well as her industrial expansion marked her as standing all but first among the progressive nations.

The supreme test of the passions aroused by war have proved that the soul of Germany was still the soul of the savage. And it is the soul and not the mind that rules in the crisis of passionate action.

The systematic training that has been imposed upon the whole German people from childhood, from the kindergarten to the barrack, has carefully nursed the primitive, elemental savagery that lies lurking in the dim recesses of the soul of

all of us. The test of our civilized state is how completely we have crushed that beast. It has been the policy of the German War Lords to cultivate German brutality—and to give it a new name—Kultur.

The indifference of the world at large of late years to German literature accounts for much of the want of enlightened perception of the processes going on in German life and thought. Since Carlyle, there has been no prophet to preach Germany's great "Mission" to the world. She herself was to write it later in the flames of Louvain and Rheims.

Her designs on the world's possessions were, it is true, more or less skillfully concealed by an outward show of friendliness. She sang lullabys of "peace" to the nations. The nations heard the

soothing strains—and dozed. Even when foreign generals and officers were invited to witness the manoeuvres of the German armies at the great Reviews, they came away convinced all the German bands were playing hymnal praise of peace. Germany took no pains to hide her growth in power. She asked half the world to come and celebrate her opening of the Kiel Canal; yet those who accepted half believed in the fraudulent suavities repeated again and again—that Germany was increasing her naval force solely to protect her commerce.

The attitude of Germany towards France since Sedan has been one of scarcely concealed envy. The rapidity with which France recovered after her crushing defeat in 1870; her amazing industrial, commercial and financial development after the smashing blow to

her prosperity, proved her the first nation in Europe in point of view of thrift, of financial soundness and of recuperative strength. Bismarck had counted on France "being rendered powerless" for at least fifty years, after paying the war indemnity of £200,000,000, or \$1,000,000,000. In less than twenty years she had become the bankers of Europe. To offset the loss of her two productive provinces, Alsace and Lorraine, France has pushed the interests of her colonies in Africa, Egypt, and in China to become contributive elements to France's prosperity. Her clever and gifted diplomats have proved to Europe that the atmosphere of courts was not needed to develop statesmanlike talents, since they could proudly point to "L'Entente Cordiale" as the master stroke of modern French diplomacy.

That Paris also should continue to be the literary, artistic, theatrical and mondaine centre of the world, the gayest as well as the most beautiful of cities, has been a bitter blow to German civic and national pride. Why should Unter den Linden, peopled with wonderful, modern statues, fail to attract the world that mistakenly prefers the Champs Elysées and the Bois de Boulogne—meagerly decorated with marble “masterpieces?”

Germany has been taught many things in the last forty years. A true feeling and a profound knowledge for art; a reverence for artistic and architectural masterpieces, are alas! tastes that cannot be taught. Artistic appreciation of the beautiful is a matter of slow growth. Centuries of progress and the slow deposit of artistic sensibilities in genera-

tions of men build up that rare quality we call taste. Without this delicate flowering of a nation's development, no real art flourishes.

Sparta was a military state; but it is the influence of Athens that has survived the downfall of classical Greece. It is Athenian art and literature that have been the fructifying element throughout the world. Ideas that take on forms of beauty; ideas embodied in beauty of form—it is these spiritualized, etherialized emanations of creative genius that alone put on immortality.

The discovery of Aristotle's works gave birth to the Renascent spirit in Italy; the art of Greece and her literature are the masterpieces other nations copy—and rarely if ever have equaled.

The spirit that animated Sparta was the positive, utilitarian, military spirit.

But it is ideas, and not the soul of a nation bent to purely material ends, to military despotism, that survive.

The spirit of militarism that has prevailed throughout Prussianized Germany has largely killed that refined, intellectual delight in beauty that made Goethe the master-poet and artist, that inspired German Art critics of the mid-nineteenth century, and that made Heine an immortal. Germany's mistaken ideas of "Kultur" are therefore self-doomed. For not only does she consider her intellectual and scientific development as supreme, but she has conceived the dangerous doctrine of insisting that the mighty military base on which rests the whole structure of her might fits her pre-eminently for governing the world. Now, no military state has ever long survived. If for no other cause, the ambition of



those who lead or head such a state doom the system to final destruction,—as was the case with the Roman Empire.

In our times and century this attempt to turn back the clock is a particularly dangerous expedient. The whole trend of modern development since the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence has been towards freedom, equality, and the loosening up of the rigors of governmental control. This German ideal of the training of a whole nation into a machine is contrary to the prevailing spirit of the age. Everything mankind has been fighting for for two thousand years will be lost, only, it is true, to be reconquered, were Germany to be victorious. For were even the dreaded worst to befall, the long, old-world struggle would but begin anew. The spirit of man reaches towards free-

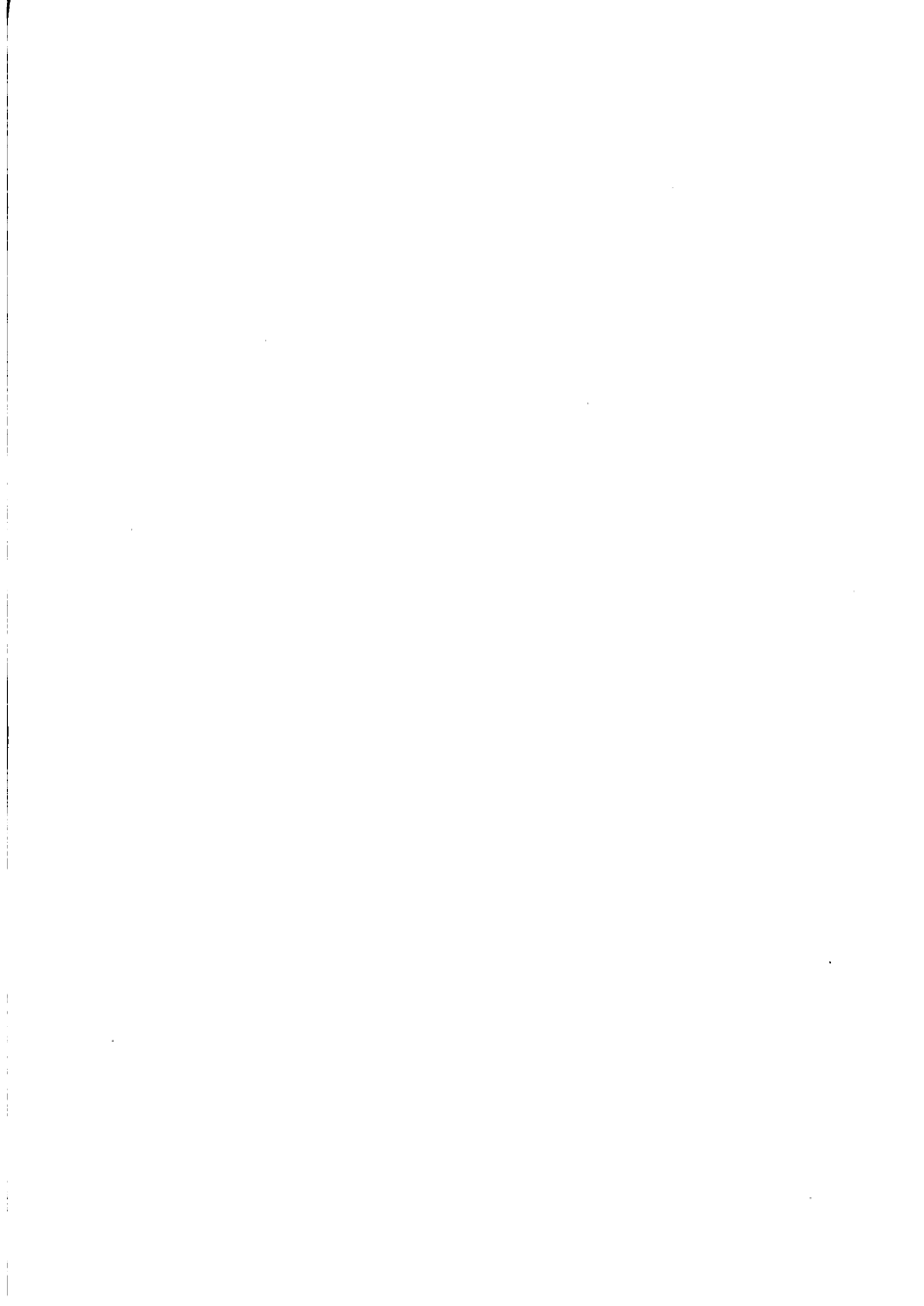
dom, as a blade of grass pushes its frail, but sufficient strength upwards through the earth clod. Through revolutions and revolts the unconquered, unconquerable human spirit struggles on to higher forms of development. The slow but grinding process of spiritual and moral evolution would eventually crush the German positivist out of existence—for the soul of man goes marching on.

France will come out of this gigantic struggle purified, electrified. For a time, as has been the case in every great war, her soldiers will be found to be turbulent, restive, difficult as civic, assimilative forces. And the nation will be a nation in mourning. Even those of her men who return will suffer from the effects of their hardships; many will have incurable wounds to nurse and crippled frames to adapt to new conditions.

But France has passed before our day beneath the rough ploughshare of war's horrors. Her wars have planted their seeds of heroism; the sap will rise again and bear its golden fruit.

Of all the "dead who speak"—"les morts qui parlent"—none will catch the inspiring song with quicker ear than the responsive, emotional French people. She will rise to heights she has never before attained; she will also re-capture her temporarily lost, inestimably precious art. For above all other nations she has learned the precious lesson and has whispered to us the priceless secret—the joy of living! la joie de vivre.

Long live France!







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